

Church of England worker-priest No. 1 is ordained

NEWS CHRONICLE REPORTER

MARTYN GRUBB, the company director's son who is being trained as the Church of England's first worker-priest, has just been ordained.

Last night after evening service at St. Peter de Beauvoir at Hackney, he joined in the Sunday night rock 'n' roll session at the church hall.

He has been curate at St. Peter's, where Teddy boys form a large proportion of the evening congregations, for six weeks and hopes to remain for another 18 months.

"After that I shall go round to the labour exchange and ask for a job," he said. "Then my wife and I will be on our own again, with no income or house from the Church, like any working couple."

The only way

"I am awfully happy here—most Sunday evenings the church is packed—but I still intend to go ahead with my plan to live the life of an ordinary working man."

"I wouldn't have become a priest at all if I couldn't do that."

Martyn, 30-year-old ex-Halleybury public schoolboy, son of Sir Kenneth Grubb, went on: "I realised that the only way I could live out my Christian ideals was to become one of the workers, permanently."

At Cambridge Martyn met his wife, Anne. They married when he came down and lived in a small furnished room while he worked in factories, earning from £6 10s. to £13 a week.

£8 5s. a week

As curate he now gets £8 5s. a week and lives rent-free in a dilapidated Victorian mansion at Stoke Newington owned by the Church.

They have three children—David, five, Marion, three and Kenneth, 10 months.

Martyn added: "The Church has given me full backing. I think it has in the past lost touch with the ordinary people. I am sure there is a need for this sort of work."



REV. MARTYN GRUBB
Joined rock 'n' roll session

PRIEST WORKS AT PRESSED STEEL

A worker priest, the Rev. Tony Williamson, of 26 Dodgson Road, Cowley, was ordained yesterday as a deacon by the Bishop of Oxford, Dr. Harry Carpenter.

He will continue his work as a tractor driver at the Pressed Steel Co. at Cowley where he has been employed for the past two years.

Dr. Carpenter said today: "Only very rarely can this kind of arrangement be properly made, but the conditions seem to be favourable in this unusual case."

"Mr. Williamson has taken this unusual step partly to provide a link between Church and industry and partly as witness to the dignity of manual labour. He is devoted to the idea in a very practical way."

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Rev. Tony clocks in with his workmates

ATRACTOR-DRIVER clocked in at his factory yesterday as the Rev. Tony Williamson, to the congratulations of the workmates he has known for two years.

Tony, the 26-year-old son of a Stepney, London, clergyman, clocked in at the giant Pressed Steel Company's car body plant at Cowley, Oxford, after being ordained a deacon in Christ Church Cathedral on Sunday.

Tony took a job as a factory hand after leaving Cuddesdon Theological College. Before that he was at Trinity College, Oxford.

Popular

He said: "I am not there primarily to get more people into church. Breaking down prejudices will be my priority job."

"Industry is a world which the Church has ignored for too long. The Church has got to accept that it has largely failed to appeal to the industrial masses. It has got to get in touch with industrial life."

Because he believes Christianity must touch all aspects of life, Tony has taken an active part in politics and is a keen trade unionist. He is secretary of the canteen committee.

He is very popular with his workmates. His foreman, Harry Jones, said: "He works well, and the others get on well with him."

Tony, who cycles to work every day, earns about 13 guineas gross each week. He is not paid by the Church.

His wife Barbara is a graduate of Somerville College, Oxford, and believes he is doing right by staying at the factory as a worker-priest.

N.B. John Strong and Michael Gedge were actually the first - having started in 1951.