

S. Helen's School, Abingdon.

SPRING TERM, 1937.

SISTER'S LETTER.

Dear Girls of S.H.S., Past and Present,

On Sunday, January 17th, at Aldenham Church, the Bishop of St. Albans dedicated a window in memory of Bridget Gibbs and also received at the Altar the sum of £100 to be invested for the benefit of a community of African girls and women called the Company of the Holy Name at S. Monica's, Penhalonga, South Rhodesia. You will find a fuller description of the window elsewhere in the magazine, but I felt that I should like, instead of writing you a letter this time, to quote the Bishop's words about Bridget, as reported in the local paper.

The Bishop based his address on the text, "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy and peace." "These words, he said, they would find in the window which had just been dedicated to the greater glory of God who Himself was a source of beauty, kindness and truth, and to the memory of Bridget Gibbs. No words could sum up better the thoughts of those who knew Bridget and loved her—and who could know her without loving her? She was one of those rare people—and they ought not to be rare—who made a person want to be good, to be a saint, and what was more, to desire her company. One somehow felt that it could be put to something so worth while, so right, so lovely, so natural, so human, so real, and yet those who knew her best realized that there was something much deeper than mere natural charm. There was something about her life and character which in the short period of twenty-seven years, had steadily grown, and now they came to see more and more why it had done so, and from what source it came. It had grown through living close to the Lord, and in this close companionship with Him in thought, prayer, sacrament and work, as years went by, they could see how she had carried from Him, an increasing measure of the spirit of love, joy, and peace, and with it an increasing power to pass on to others what she herself had learned.

The Bishop went on to point out that living close to God and loving Him meant sacrifice to self, and he said that if, like Bridget Gibbs, people could only learn to put God first and know His companionship, then they would find the most glorious thing in all the world.

The shock of Miss Gibbs's death was still upon them, and the light of a good many lives seemed to have gone out; yet when they gave her to the keeping of God, then gratitude to Him for all they owed to her, triumphed over human sorrow. So it was that afternoon. Above all sorrow were their heartfelt thanksgivings to Him for the rich gift of such a life. Her memory would continue to live in that house of prayer, and away beyond seas in consecrating the lives of the little Sisterhood of women and girls in Penhalonga—a living witness in the heart of Africa, of the love and joy and peace of Bridget's life."

I will say no more, but I do commend what the Bishop has said to your earnest consideration, as you prepare for Easter Communion.

Your loving

SISTER THEODORA.

CHAPEL NOTES.

During Lent we have had the pleasure of welcoming here again Father Dale, who has been giving most inspiring addresses to the Upper and Middle School on Wednesday afternoons.

The Chaplain's lantern services on Friday, though intended primarily for Third Formers, have attracted people of all ages.

The Preparatory Department have had their own special service on Thursday mornings, with Miss Warington.

This year St. David's House asked to keep their Day by a special Mass in chapel, at which they were entirely responsible for the music. Father Pearson most kindly spoke to them, at the service, on St. David's life and work.

The following girls hope to be confirmed at Christ Church, Oxford, on March 20th :—Diana Wade-Palmer, Cynthia Brown, Rosalie Ellis,

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| CA. Joan Hancock. | Desirée Wratlaw. |
| C. Florence Howard. | Fay Collin. |
| CD. Doris Crouch. | Patience Anderson. |
| D. Marion North. | Charis Watson. |
| GD. Phyllis Hitchcock. | Patricia White. |
| | Betty Harriss. |
| | Nannette Randow. |

THE BRIDGET GIBBS MEMORIAL WINDOW IN ALDENHAM CHURCH.

The window is on the north side of the tower close to the font, and represents St. Bridget reading a Bible with a small child looking up at her. Swallows are flying about her head. In a panel below there is a picture of a Church in the Tyrol where Miss Gibbs and Miss Roper are buried. The background is of gentian and edelweiss. A scroll bears the words: "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy and peace." The inscription is:—

In their love for Bridget Julia Gibbs, and in thankfulness to God for a beautiful life, this representation of St. Bridget is placed here by the people of Aldenham and others.

She was drowned, together with Katherine Roper, above the Village of Valles, South Tyrol, on the 22nd of June, 1935, aged 27, and was buried there.

His servants shall do Him service,
And they shall see His face.

From the *West Herts and Watford Observer*,
January 22nd, 1937.