

ST. JOHN'S PARISH MESSENGER (Dec. 1966) - RECTOR'S LETTER

My Dear Friends,

In this Parish Messenger I would like to place on record this parish's recognition of the life and ministry of Leonard Neville Sutton, a former, beloved Rector of this parish. His sudden death on Tuesday afternoon, 8th November, came as a great shock to everyone. The great service in St. John's on the following Thursday afternoon was a wonderful tribute to an outstanding priest of this Diocese and of the Australian Church. The presence of so many of the clergy of the Diocese was an indication of the high regard the Archdeacon and Mrs. Sutton have been held by all.

Leonard Sutton was born in St. Kilda, Victoria, but at an early age his family moved to family Sydney and for a period he attended the St. Andrew's Cathedral Choir School. He was the first choirboy of the School to become Precentor of St. Andrew's Cathedral. Leaving school and following a secular occupation for a few years, he matriculated and later graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Arts from the University of Sydney. The Archdeacon went to Moore College and having obtained Th.L. (2nd Class Hons.) he was made a deacon in 1925 and ordained priest in 1926. On being awarded a Lucas Tooth Scholarship, he went overseas in 1927 to study at Oxford and was finally awarded the degree of Master of Arts. On returning to N.S.W. after this distinguished scholastic record, the Archdeacon continued in educational spheres, with the Choir School at St. Andrew's, the King's School at Parramatta and then to Melbourne as chaplain and Vice Principal at Brighton Grammar School.

In 1939 the Archdeacon returned to Sydney to take up parish work at St. Oswald's, Haberfield for a short time and then to Ashfield. In 1949 the Patronage Council invited the Rev. L. N. Sutton to follow Canon W. Greenwood as Rector of this Church of St. John's, Launceston. The new Rector and his wife soon endeared themselves to the people of St. John's and served here for some 12 years. In 1961 the Archdeacon accepted the invitation to become Rector of Evandale and in the past five years the Archdeacon and Mrs. Sutton have served the Church faithfully in that area. In 1953 he was appointed Archdeacon of Launceston and held that appointment until his death, together with that of Vicar General of the Diocese which he undertook in 1963.

This brief summary indicates something of the great contribution which Archdeacon Sutton made to the life of the Church in Tasmania. His friendliness and his sense of humour gathered around him a great circle of friends. The large congregation in St. John's Church on the day of the funeral and the hundreds of tributes which Mrs. Sutton has received are an indication of the great respect in which he was held. The Vestry of our parish at its last meeting recorded a minute of appreciation for the life and ministry of its former Rector, Leonard Neville Sutton, and of sympathy to Mrs. Sutton, Patricia and David. We assure them of our prayers for them at this time and that God will uphold them now and in the days to come.

On the same night as the Archdeacon entered Hospital, tragedy befell another family associated with St. John's Church. Ronald Jeanne, a member of our Youth Club, was electrocuted. To Mr. and Mrs. Jeanne and Mae, we extend our very deep sympathy in their tragic loss and pray too that they may know that God will uphold them in their day of trouble. Two other members of our congregation suffered bereavement in the past month, Mrs. D. V. Boyd, a loyal member of the Choir lost her mother and Mrs. W. D. Lean's husband died suddenly, Mrs. Lean is one of our regular communicants. To these ladies, we express our sympathy and the assurance of our prayers. So, I would conclude this letter with a reminder of the verses which the Bishop quoted at the conclusion of his address on the occasion of the Archdeacon's funeral. "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also". St. John 14: 1-3.

May God bless you all,

Yours very sincerely.

HENRY A. JERRIM.