

achieving quality library education, will normally be prized and carefully appraised. Indeed, the library educator is still at heart, a librarian, and as such he wants and needs to know in detail the situations which his students may face and for which he may not be adequately preparing them. Such "feedback" from the profession is essential to the development of a vital and exciting library educational program. And — given the context of today's world — excitement about library education is a distinct possibility.

ROLE OF THE PARISH LIBRARY

By

MRS. DON A. GALLIMORE¹

Christ Episcopal Church library began some 15 years ago under the guidance of a committee composed of parish members. They chose the library's first selections, which together with donations and memorial gifts, composed the 300 volumes which constituted the library nucleus.

The library operation continued in this manner until 1961, when it became a project of one of the women's guilds. They began an updating and revision which found Christ Church with an expanded library of some 1,200 books and a completely new system of cataloging and circulation.

Although the library had been originally set up under the Dewey system, the committee found that some slight adaptations and occasionally the creation of new categories made it easier for laymen to find books.

A system of "self-service" in check-out procedure was set up, along with a series of explanations on the use of the card catalog and shelves (it is amazing how many adults acquainted with the Dewey system in their school days seem to forget totally any part of the system in later years), and check-out procedure. These explanations are repeated to adult classes and other meetings (teachers and group leaders) at intervals so that potential readers will not be discouraged from using the library because they do not know how to find a book.

The bulk of the Christ Church library is theological and related material; however, some related fiction and a number of biographies are also included. A separate reference section contains concordances, dictionaries and encyclopedias, and also serves as a repository for material used by some county-wide Episcopal groups, which use the library as their central meeting place.

A section of the adult library is devoted to young adults, ages 15 to 19, along with material helpful to advisers and workers with this age group. YA selections include "Campus Gods on Trial", "Facts of Life and Love For Teenagers", and the ever-popular Salinger books, once used as study material by youth groups.

The children's library is entirely separate from the adult library, being contained in a separate room. The committee believed that children might be discouraged from using the library if they felt they had to enter a room which would look to them

¹ Mrs. Gallimore has been chairman of the library committee at Christ Episcopal Church, Charlotte, for the past six years. A graduate of UNC at Greensboro, she has taught at Kings Business College and Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte.



Rev. Marshall T. Ware, associate minister of Christ Episcopal Church, and Mrs. Don A. Gallamore, chairman of the library committee, are shown examining a book in the church library. These two individuals play a major role in the selection of books to be added to library shelves.

large and confusing. Therefore, plans for the educational wing housing the library included a small, sunny room which is decorated with bright pictures and plants.

Since there is no full-time librarian to help children find books, the committee made a complete break with the Dewey system and grouped books under categories which would be recognizable to even the youngest users. Such shelf guides as "Our Bible" (OB), "Stories of Jesus" (SJ), "God and Myself" (GM), "My Family and My Friends" (MF), "God's World Today" (GWT), "Prayers" (P), "Leaders Guides" (LG) and, of course, "Stories" (S) make selecting a book a quick delight to young readers. Teachers, too, have applauded this system, since most of their teaching materials are organized along similar lines.

An additional help to teachers and parents which is currently under development is the additional cataloging of books according to age group suitability. The file will be set up under headings as "3-year-olds", "4-year-olds" etc., with sub-headings under each for the different categories of Prayers, Songs, and all others. A teacher of the four-year-old group could then easily see how many and what books would be suitable for her group

on a certain subject. This information is being compiled by a search of publishers catalogs and with the help of local book stores.

To promote general circulation and aid readers, shelves of special interest are set up in the adult library from time to time, featuring books on such subjects as the God-Is-Dead controversy, Lenten reading, and the most popular repeat subject—teenagers. A glass-cased bulletin board in the hall near the library is used for tie-in cover displays.

Additionally the library cart, accompanied by a member of the library committee, is taken to the adult classes during Lent to encourage a program of Lenten reading by church members. The same service is also available for special class sessions upon request by teachers or staff.

An extra service the library performs, at no profit, is the display of books for Christmas gifts. These volumes are selected at a local book store and displayed in the adult classes during Sundays in December, at which time they are available for sale.

Christ Church Library receives new books from several sources; however, the bulk comes from purchases through the library budget, gifts, and memorials. In the latter manner the children's library was extremely proud and fortunate to be the recipient of a complete set of *World Book Encyclopedia*, including dictionaries, atlas, and Childcraft volumes. The library is also a member of several church-sponsored book clubs, facilitating the purchase of new religious books at special rates.

Occasionally the library receives a number of duplicate copies of a certain book. An extra copy or two is placed in the library replacement file and the overage is given to a young Episcopal church which has a limited library budget. Gift books which are determined to be of insufficient interest to be included in the library are given to the public library or placed in a local orphanage if they are children's books.

The library's actual operation is now directed by a committee of five women—the chairman and four assistants who rotate annually. Each assistant is responsible for one week of library duty each month. During this week she reshelves books, sends out overdue notices, calls delinquent returnees, and is responsible for special library work, such as assembling a special interest shelf. Cataloging is shared by all committee members.

The library presently contains nearly 2,000 books. Each May a complete inventory is made; and surprisingly, for such a completely "self service" operation, the annual loss is only about 7 books, many of which are subsequently found and returned.

Looking forward, the committee is seeking new ways to increase circulation and make library use as simple and easy as possible—the two essentials for keeping and increasing the parish library as a vital part of the parish life.

"Books won't stay banned. They won't burn. Ideas won't go to jail."

—Alfred W. Griswold,

Essays in Education

1954