

Kyrie (Fauré: Nissa Bassi)

Shalom (Reflected, 2nd) LENT PREFACE

At one stage in my broadcasting of this Midday Prayer programme I used to use a little studio here at ^{RTHK} RHK which had a glass-panel in the wall and adjoined another little studio. While waiting to go on the air, I used often watch with fascination a little old man in the next studio who was doing a programme for what is now ^{Radio 1} RHK 1. He was a story-teller, and sat at his table talking away into the microphone, scarcely referring to his script (which he occasionally held in one hand), but evidently 'living' the story he was telling: his facial expressions and gestures were of course lost on his radio audience, and I of course couldn't hear a word he was saying. I remembered him ^{the other day} [yesterday ^{preparing for yesterday's liturgy evening}] and those other story-tellers who used draw a rept audience every night (as perhaps they still do) at the "Poor Man's Night Club" on the HK waterfront. For I was reflecting on how people first heard the gospels, how in fact much of the gospels and indeed of the whole bible were put together into the form we have them in today — by being recited and listened to, remembered and repeated. The story-teller art is a dying one — or, rather, people don't listen to story-tellers any more in the old way: instead we have movies & TV dramas, and anyway all the "information", all the content of what it was the story-teller's function to learn and pass on is easily retrievable now, in written form in books, libraries, computer-centres & so on. Our modern "attention"-span has generally become so brief. Is that why we're not usually supposed to be able to listen to more than a short extract from the scriptures at a time? A

Charles it was read in full?

crowded church on a Sunday morning isn't perhaps a congenial time for really listening to and taking in a long gospel reading — which is presumably why on some occasions we get a shortened version of the appointed selection. But really, how often do we in fact read or hear the whole story? A good case in point is St John's gospel, which has a whole chapter (full of symbolism, meaning & drama) about the man born blind. ^{at who was} Since I seldom read long extracts on this programme, I'd like to invite you to listen to this today, keeping in mind its Leiten relevance and the baptismal-initiation instruction which seems to have been St John's purpose in the way he records it. But first a little music: "Rescue me my God"

MUSIC - PRAYER [RHK-DEE-E-10 1' 2:14]
John 9 (Sund. Miss. p53-6)

It was the gospel reading for the 4th Sund. of Lent, yesterday. I wonder in how many