

## **Bruce Kent**

### *Christ's non-violence*

The curse of violence falls on our arrival  
And in frequent struggles for survival  
But stimulates people to pine for peace  
For plans and practices to pen the beast.

War terrorises, butchers, shrieks in alarm,  
The serene Buddha taught us not to harm.  
Then the raw, new Christian movement  
Brought Christ's command to be non-violent.

3 anti-war centuries made martyrs' bones  
Mihi licet militari, cut on gravestones  
Of legionnaire refusals to go to war  
'I may work as policeman, not do more.'

In full, *Mihi licet militari sed non bellari*

### *Christ's teaching taken courageously*

Then compromise from the great Augustine  
Loosened loopholes with just war doctrine.  
Peace work we find in Francis, Erasmus, More,  
Las Casas, Vittoria, the Jesuit protector  
Cities, Friends, Peace Churches. All showed  
Compassion, and perilously in peace, abode  
With Christ, loving His Gospel of non-violence.  
As Dunant of battles' agonies broke the silence.  
Inspired too by Christ were Gandhi, war-objectors,  
Women and men of all kinds, rogues to rectors.  
Martin Luther King, and in the same breath,  
Bruce Kent who's left us. We mourn his death.  
He spent his life wholly for others, for persons  
And nations, to share love and peace in abundance.

### *The lives of Bruce Kent*

If we had surveyed all the parts he'd play  
And guessed his ultimate chosen way-  
Jobs that would fail his soul to nourish  
Or others that could see him flourish,  
We'd imagine him a legal eagle,  
A tank corp's genial rebel general,  
An airline pilot, international,  
An MP emphatic, stirring trouble,  
A cheerful chaplain, kindly, pastoral  
Or rare, cool cat--a star Cardinal!  
He was a prophet-priest, a paragon,  
Who'd seen War in Biafra, stark, full on,  
Violating humans, body and soul.  
Fighting War with love was his major role.

*He took a Law Degree at Oxford  
He did National Service with tanks  
He learned to fly at University  
He was a parliamentary candidate in Abingdon  
He was the RC Chaplain at London University  
Before his peace-making he was on his way.  
His career was stalled by his dissidence  
He visited Nigeria in this war for War on Want*