



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 2020

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Introduction

On this Remembrance Sunday, in which we all have to worship again in our homes as our churches are closed, we commemorate the end of WW1 on the 11th of November, remembering those who lived and died in the service of this country, and of freedom, justice and peace. We remember those who died in the two World Wars in the 20th Century as well as the many other wars and conflicts that have blighted our history, and some of which are still continuing. We remember and we recommit ourselves to seek peace, to work for peace so that there will be no wars anymore...no suffering of the innocent, no more dying on the battlefield. So whether you wear a red poppy, a white poppy, a purple poppy, or all or none, we all pray and hope for the same. In this worship there will be the act of Remembrance and the two minute silence. If you can keep this silence at 11am, that would be good but earlier or later is no problem.

Call to Worship

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with God? (Micah 6:8)

Hymn

Our God our help in ages past

Prayer

Eternal God, on this day when we commemorate and commend to you those who lived and died in the service of others, we are comforted and strengthened by our faith in your goodness, by your promise that death is defeated, evil ultimately overcome, and by the peace given to us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

O God in whom all things live, who invites us to seek you, and is ever ready to be found: To know you is life...To serve you is freedom

To praise you is our joy...We bless and worship you

Yet year by year, week by week, day by day we so readily forget your love.

As individuals and as a nation, we confess that we keep alive in our hearts the passions, false pride and half truths that so easily lead to hatred, the dehumanising of others and conflict and war. We pray for your forgiveness...for time to amend and for the grace and comfort of your

Spirit. Gracious and merciful God, help us to learn to live faithfully.....with understanding and compassion. Help us to recognize our common humanity, even with those who seem different from us. Give us tools of reconciliation, the grace of patience and careful listening, the passion for justice and truth, and an acknowledgement of our shortcomings and failings. Above all, help us to overcome our fears as guided by your Spirit and following Jesus we seek to witness to your peace and justice, bringing hope and healing in the world...In Jesus' name we pray

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 2: 2-5 & Matthew 5: 38-48

Reflection

Today, Remembrance Sunday, we remember, as we have done since the end of the first World War, in which a very significant number of young men of one generation died "in Flanders fields" and beyond. It was also a war that many regarded as so needless and senseless that the world was supposed to have become sick of war, hence it was called "the war to end all wars." Unfortunately, it was not to be.....

Today we remember again those who have died in war, those who were injured, those who were traumatized, and we remember them for their sacrifice as they fought for freedom, for justice and for peace. We also remember all who died because of war. Civilians who lost their lives, not only in the two World Wars but in the many other wars that blight our history.

Wars and conflicts are still a very present reality around the world and we should always take care not to make Remembrance day a day of nationalism or of glorification of war. War is always destructive and costly. And so the question we have to face again and again is: what have we done to make the sacrifices of war "worthwhile?" What are we doing to honour the sacrifice of those who gave their lives for freedom and for peace?

Today we are reminded of God's will and desire for a world of peace, free of conflict and war. We find it expressed in Isaiah's vision of a world in which God will arbitrate between the nations and people and swords will be beaten into ploughshares and nation will not rise against nation anymore. And in the gospel reading Jesus calls us to a way of compassion, peace, and reconciliation, rather than of aggression and retaliation. Jesus sets forth God's vision of a world where love reigns, in which we break the cycle of

violence and destruction, which actually means that we have to work relentlessly for peace and justice for all. And we do so as we know fully well that without justice there will be no peace; the problem of conflict and war will never be resolved if we do not overcome the inequality and suffering in the world. God loves and cares for all people, God sending good weather and refreshing rain on all people alike, for all are children of God. And so our neighbourly love should extend far and wide and even seeking to overcome enmity. “You shall love your neighbour...” and, who knows, war might be no more.....and peace may prevail!

Prayers

God of justice and peace, we pray for those who have been injured or disabled through war.

For those who have lost homes and security through conflict;
for those who have lost loved relatives in wars;
for those who face danger and take risks for peace;
for all those, especially children, caught up in current conflicts;
for refugees and all those in need of physical and mental support.
God of encouragement and Saviour of the despairing,
comfort those who remember past sacrifices and guide us in building a just and peaceful community for all. **Amen.**

History can inspire or trap. Walls can protect or divide.
Words can encourage or inflame. Power can free or destroy.
Touch can comfort or violate. Peace can be shared or withheld.
Gracious God, on this day, when we remember past and present conflicts, we pray for the divided peoples of the world, that leaders, governments and each one of us may use our resources, our opportunities and our lives in the service of reconciliation, for the sake of present and future generations and to the glory of your name. **Amen.**

Hymn Thy kingdom come on bended knee

Dedication of Offering

Bless our gifts, O God, and may they be used to honour you in the community and in the world, contributing to your kingdom of justice and peace for all. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Act of Remembrance

Let us remember before God, and commend to his sure keeping those who have died in war and conflict; those whom we know and whose memory we treasure; all who lived and died in the service of humanity.

They shall not grow old as we that are left to grow old
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them. **We will remember them**

SILENCE

Prayer

Ever living God, we remember those whom you have gathered from the storm of war into the peace of your presence. May that same peace calm our fears, bring justice to all people and establish harmony among the nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And we pray together.....OUR FATHER

Kohima Epitaph

When you go home, tell them of us and say:
“For your tomorrow, we gave our today”

Act of Commitment

Let us commit ourselves to responsible living and faithful service:

We will strive for all that makes for peace

We will seek to heal the wounds of war

We will work for a just future for all humanity

Hymn For the healing of the nation

Blessing

Peace in our world. Peace in our hearts. Peace in our homes
The peace that passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds in Jesus Christ. **Amen**