

Remembrance Sunday 2020

Good morning, welcome to our Remembrance Day service. On this day when we remember the sacrifice that men and women have made for us let's start by remembering that we are in the presence of Almighty God. Let's pray:

“Heavenly Father we thank you that today as we remember the sacrifice of others, we are also remembering the extent of your love for us. We remember that you sent Jesus into this world to show us how to live, to be a teacher who teaches us how to follow your Way and through his death be the means by which our relationship with you can be restored. Today we also remember that you have given us Your Spirit to be with us, to help us as we seek to follow Jesus and live in your Way. We thank you that whether we are gathered in the same building or whether we are in scattered in different places watching this together on our screens we are one in you. We pray that your Spirit will speak to us, bless us and inspire us this morning. Amen

Don't forget

Have a look at the pictures below for 20 seconds, then cover them up and see how many items you can remember.



There were sixteen in total. How many did you get right? Of course, the easiest way of remembering would be to look at the picture, but you didn't peep did you?!

There are lots of different ways we try not to forget things. In years gone by people would tie knots in handkerchiefs to remind them, but the problem is that you still had to remember what the knot represented. Maybe you are someone who writes lists such as shopping lists. Some people need lists to keep track of their lists. Perhaps you use a diary so you don't forget meetings, important events and people's birthdays. Nowadays modern technology has advanced so far that our phones will speak to us to remind us of things we don't want to forget.

On Remembrance Sunday our poppies act as a reminder. We wear them to help us not to forget the sacrifice people made in wars to win or preserve our freedom. On Remembrance Sunday we use words like, “We will remember them,” and, “Lest we forget.” In a moment we will share two

minutes of silence together and we will remember... we will be reminded of the sacrifice of people laying down their lives in order that we might be free.

2 minutes silence.



If you are able you may like to join with the service from the Cenotaph on your television or radio.

Prayers (from Gathering for Worship)

Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
we pray this day for all those
who continue to suffer because of war:
widows, orphans, and all who are bereaved;
the wounded, crippled, deaf, dumb, and blinded;
the shell-shocked and the traumatized;
refugees without home, work, or country.
Grant to them all your healing and strength,
your help and consolation,
and use us in this service, we pray;
for Jesus Christ's sake.

God of hosts,
yours is the battle against evil,
yours is the victory over death.
We come to you
with memories of war and death,
with scars of victory and defeat.
By your Son Jesus,
who bears the scars of his victory
won not for himself but for others,
grant us this day healing for the past,
and resolution for the future.
So may your world discover and know that peace
which is your purpose for us all;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In remembrance

Remembrance Sunday is a time when we are encouraged not to forget. But 'remembrance' can also be a positive thing - not simply 'not forgetting' but actively remembering and thinking about someone or something. That's what Jesus had in mind when at the Last Supper - the meal he shared with his friends before his arrest and death - he said, "Do this in remembrance of me," as he gave them bread and wine that represented his body and blood.

When Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me," I don't think it was remembrance in the sense of a poppy - so that we don't forget him. There's no way his friends could forget him: they

spent three years with him; they'd seen him do miraculous things; they'd heard him say astonishing things; they'd been with him in the deepest moments and the most wonderful moments. They were never going to forget Jesus.

No. when Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me" I think he was talking about remembrance in a different way. Perhaps a better word would be 'commemoration': a reminder to prompt them once again to give thanks to God and to honour Jesus.

When we share bread and wine in church, we are recalling the meaning of Jesus' death. We are refreshing our experience of him. And we are reliving our memories of our relationship with him - perhaps remembering things for which we need to say sorry but also to remember that because he died, we can be forgiven.

Often after a funeral service people gather as family and friends of the person who has died. Usually there is food and drink involved. And together they remember stories about that person: "Do you remember when..." and "what about that time when..." Maybe they laugh. Maybe they cry. They remember.

When Jesus met with his friends for the Last Supper it was a similar sort of meal. But Jesus did things differently. Instead of waiting until after his death he brought the meal forwards and joined in with them. They shared that special Passover meal and during the meal he took some bread and when he had given thanks to God he broke it and gave it to his friends saying, "This is my body, which is for you, do this in remembrance of me."

Then a little later he took a cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new covenant sealed by my blood, drink this in remembrance of me." He wanted them to understand the meaning of his death that was about to happen. And even though Jesus was raised back to life on the third day after his execution we still remember him through bread and wine in church.

When we eat bread together and drink wine together in that way we remember Jesus... not because we have forgotten him, but because we want to be reminded afresh of the meaning of his death, to experience him afresh, and to remember our relationship with him. We remember that because he died, we can be put right with God.

You may not have bread and wine with you right now. If you do please eat and drink in remembrance of him. If not, I invite you to pause on this Remembrance Sunday to remember Jesus in prayer:

"Jesus, you said to your friends, 'Do this in remembrance of me'. We thank you that when we eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of you, we are reminded about you. We recall that your death was for a reason - to make it possible for us to be God's friends, even that he would call us his children. We thank you that your Spirit refreshes our experience of you as we eat and drink as he nourishes us again spiritually. We thank you that the real bread and wine remind us that you too are really with us by your Spirit."

In closing I would like to invite you to read the words of St Patrick's Breastplate as you remember Jesus:

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger. Amen