

Remembrance Sunday

8th. November 2020

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

In Flanders Fields by John McRae

Today, we pause to remember ... to reflect ...to recall sacrifices ... to pray for peace ... and to worship Almighty God, whose purposes are good;
whose power sustains the world he has made;
who loves us, though we have failed in his service;
who gave Jesus Christ for the life of the world;
who by his Holy Spirit leads us in his way.

On this special day, we remember those who have lived and died in in the service of others;
we pray for all who suffer through war and are in need;
and we pray that the whole world may acknowledge Jesus as Lord.

Let us begin by confessing to God the shortcomings of the world;
its pride, its selfishness, its greed; its evil divisions and hatreds,
and let us confess our share in what is wrong.

Lord have mercy

Christ have mercy

Lord have mercy

In your mercy, Lord, forgive what we have been, help us to amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be; that we may do justly, love mercy,
and walk humbly with you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord, help us to remember. That is the theme of our first hymn.

A special Remembrance hymn sung by the Quintet Choir

*Lord, help us to remember
the victims of past wars:
the ones who fell in combat
believing in the cause,
the ones pressed into service
who fought against their will,
the ones who suffered torment,
the ones who suffer still.*

*Lord, help us to consider
the conflicts of our day:
the cruel and complex struggles,
the games the powerful play,
and, by your Holy Spirit,
enable us to stand
for justice in all nations
and peace in every land.*

*Lord, give us grace and courage
to live by your commands,
to love our fellow-humans
with all that love demands;
and may we truly honour
the fallen of the past
by working now for justice,
to build your peace at last.*

So we pray that we may work for justice and peace, and for wisdom — which brings us to our first reading which comes from the Wisdom of Solomon.

This book is addressed to the rulers of the earth urging them to love justice and righteousness and to seek wisdom, which is portrayed beautifully in this passage.

Reading 1: Wisdom of Solomon 6.12-16

*Wisdom is radiant and unfading,
and she is easily discerned by those who love her,
and is found by those who seek her.
She hastens to make herself known to those who desire her.
One who rises early to seek her will have no difficulty,
for she will be found sitting at the gate.
To fix one's thought on her is perfect understanding,
and one who is vigilant on her account will soon be free from care,
because she goes about seeking those worthy of her,
and she graciously appears to them in their paths,
and meets them in every thought.*

Now to our second reading. This comes from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians 4.13-18. Here Paul explains what happens to people who have died. Of particular concern to the Thessalonians was the status of the dead pending Jesus's return to earth. Did their death somehow disqualify them? By no means, says Paul.

Reading 2: 1 Thessalonians 4.13-18

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord for ever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

Encouragement, and hope: the theme of our second hymn.

A hymn of hope for the future sung by the Quintet Choir

*Hope for the world's despair:
we feel the nations' pain;
can anything repair
this broken earth again?
For this we pray:
in every place
a spark of grace
to light the way.*

*Ease for the troubled mind
in endless conflict caught,
each soul that cannot find
the peace beyond all thought.
May they be blessed
with healing balm
for inner calm
and perfect rest.*

*Love for the human heart:
when hate grows from our fears
and inwardly we start
to turn our ploughs to spears.
Help us to sow
love's precious seed
in word and deed,
that peace may grow.*

Commentary: The Battle of Britain remembered

Moment of Reflection

Look at a poppy — one that perhaps you are wearing or the one on the screen now.

Poppies are bright and cheerful flowers: give thanks to God for the lives of those who have died in war, remembering all the joy they brought to families and friends, and all the good things they did for their home and their country.

Then look at the red petals: red reminds us of danger and harm. Ask God to be close to those who are still facing danger each day, to give courage to the armed forces, and compassion to all who help others.

Place your whole hand over the poppy: poppies are also fragile and need to be handled gently. God cares for those who are hurting and those who are sad. Ask God to comfort all who are grieving the loss of someone they love.

Finally place a finger on the centre of the poppy: ask God to help you play your part in working for peace in the world.

Now let us pray for peace.

Prayers for peace

[Response to Lord hear us is Lord, hear us and help us.]

Let us pray to Almighty God for the needs of the world.

Where there is war and conflict, we pray for peace and security;
where there is injustice and oppression, we pray for justice and freedom;
where there is hatred and distrust, we pray for harmony and understanding.

Lord hear us. **Lord, hear us and help us.**

We pray for world leaders and all who exercise influence over others,
that they may act wisely and justly and seek the common good;
for the United Nations and all international organisations working for justice and peace,
that they may be strengthened.

Lord hear us. **Lord, hear us and help us.**

We pray for all who suffer as a result of war, in body and mind or spirit;
for all who have lost their homes and possessions,
for all who go hungry as a result of war.

Lord hear us. **Lord, hear us and help us.**

We pray for all who have died in war;
those who have taken up arms;
those caught up in conflicts in any way;
and all innocent victims of war and violence.

Lord hear us. **Lord, hear us and help us.**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation;

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Jerusalem

And did those feet in ancient time

Walk upon England's mountains green?

And was the holy Lamb of God

On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine

Shine forth upon our clouded hills?

And was Jerusalem builded here

Among these dark Satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold:

Bring me my arrows of desire:

Bring me my spear: O clouds unfold!

Bring me my chariot of fire.

I will not cease from mental fight,

Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand

Till we have built Jerusalem

In England's green and pleasant land.

The National Anthem

God save our gracious Queen,

Long live our noble Queen,

God save the Queen.

Send her victorious, happy and glorious,

long to reign over us: God save the Queen.

Act of commitment

**Lord God our Father we pledge ourselves
to serve you and all people in the cause of peace.
We commit ourselves to peace.**

**Guide us by your Holy Spirit;
give us wisdom; give us courage;
give us hope;
and keep us faithful now and always. Amen.**

Final Blessing

May God grant to the living, grace;
to the departed, rest;
to the Church, the Queen, the Commonwealth, and all people,
peace and justice;
and to us and all his servants, life everlasting;
and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be amongst us and remain with us evermore.

Grant us peace.

SMitF A Gaelic Blessing

Deep peace of the running wave to you,
Deep peace of the flowing air to you,
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep peace of the shining stars to you,
Deep peace of the gentle night to you,
Moon and stars pour their healing light on you,
Deep peace of Christ, the light of the world to you,
Deep peace of Christ to you.