



Reflection by Rev'd Anne Burden

Remembrance Sunday / Third Sunday before Advent
Matt 25:1-13
12th November 2023

Remembrance Sunday

It's always difficult to know what to say on Remembrance Day. It's a time of strong feelings for many people - about how the day should be marked, and what should be part of the remembering - and there are different views about this, just because people themselves are different - different thoughts and feelings arising from different histories, and different hopes and dreams for the future. People have individual needs on Remembrance Day and indeed the whole season of remembering - and most people of goodwill would seek to respect this, as well as to focus on the future as well as the past, and on the hopes of everyone for peace and reconciliation.

Balancing sensitivity with honesty can be tricky, and the prayer which follows tries to do just that. I can't remember where it comes from, so I can't give anyone credit for it - but that's not what prayers are about. Prayer can be the offering of one person's words - given generously so that they become the offering of many people's hearts and lives. As you read, I invite you to take whatever speaks to you as your own.

Lord with thankfulness we show our respect for the past,
and stand in hope for the future.

We give thanks for those who made sacrifices,
and the freedom for which they fought.

We give thanks for those who faithfully recall the horror of war,
and those who remind us of its great price.

We give thanks for pride and discipline,
and remember horror and panic.

We give thanks for heroism,
and remember orders blindly obeyed.

We give thanks for purpose, meaning and identity,
and remember devastating loss.

We give thanks for the making of life-long friends,
and remember the loss of love ones, the loss of a generation.

We give thanks for service offered and a sense of duty,
and remember those who had no choice in the matter.

We give thanks for lives given to save others,
and remember lives wasted for a few yards of no-man's land.

We remember the courage of those who faced bullet and shell,
and the different courage of those whose conscience would not let them kill.

Lord we give you thanks for your gift of life
that gives us hope even in times of death,
and renews us to face the coming days,
through Jesus Christ who gave his life for us.

Amen