

Remembrance Sunday 2019 (10.11.19)

Given at the Civic War Memorial

Micah 4: 1 – 5

We gather this morning to remember before God all who have died for their country in war, not just in the First World War and the Second World War, but in all the conflicts since, whether that be in the Falklands, Bosnia, Iraq or Afghanistan and, of course not forgetting the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

For many, coming here today will have been a very personal pilgrimage. Some will be focusing recollections of the privations and horrors of war and honouring the memory of friends and comrades lost in conflict. Others will be carrying grief for a loved one who never returned home. And all of us are acknowledging, and expressing our gratitude, for the fact that we are only able to be here because others have seen things that nobody should ever have to see and done things that nobody should ever have to do –

and they have done it on our behalf. Because of their sacrifices, we have our freedom.

The image the Bible uses for perfect freedom are the conditions where everybody is able to work and is free to sit under their own fig tree. They're not suffering either under military oppression or from economic enslavement. They can be themselves, content and secure in their own lot. When such perfect freedom exists there will be no further need of war; no more need for anyone to endure the conditions, the sacrifice and the grief that we commemorate today.

The invitation and the challenge to those of us who are left is to work out how we can find such freedom. It's clear that the so-called war to end all wars 100 years ago didn't do so. There has been so much conflict since. It's clear that no General Election in the last 100 years has done so – and the one on the 12th December won't do so either, no matter who wins it.

The Revd Matthew Pollard, Rector of Bridlington Priory

The only way to grasp that vision of perfect freedom is to reach outside and beyond ourselves; to dare to believe that we are able to do things that we cannot do in our own strength; and to have the combination of both courage and humility that it takes to ask God to help us.

It is through grace alone – the grace Christians believe we meet through Jesus Christ - that we can find hope, work together, dispel suspicion, banish hatred, heal our woundedness and be assured that the sacrifices of those whom we commemorate today are truly honoured.

Amen.

Remembrance Sunday Prayers 2019

Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed: kindle, we pray, in the hearts of all, the true love of peace and guide with your pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth that in tranquillity your kingdom may go forward, till the earth is filled with the knowledge of your love; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. **Amen**

Almighty God, stretch forth your mighty arm to strengthen and protect the armed forces: grant that meeting danger with courage, and all occasions with discipline and loyalty, they may truly serve the cause of justice and peace; to the honour of your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord God our Father, we pledge ourselves to serve you and all your peoples, in the cause of peace, for the relief of want and suffering, and for the praise of your name.

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