

Vicar's Blog

November 2018

Learning from our mistakes

From early childhood we learn from our mistakes. We learn about balance, because we fall over. We pick ourselves up reflect on what went wrong, adjust our approach and have another go. Through reflecting, learning and trying again we improve our ability to succeed.

This year Remembrance Sunday services and other tributes will be bigger and better because we are commemorating the centenary of the end of the First World War. In churches and Cathedrals around this nation and in Europe, people will celebrate the end of conflict and the promise of a peaceful world.

There were 20 million deaths and 21 million wounded during this war to end all wars. The total number of deaths includes 9.7 million military personnel and about 10 million civilians. Many were scarred for life by bodily mutilation, psychological and emotional scarring.

Yet only 20 years later, the world encountered anger, conflict death and destruction with the second World War, during which there was even greater loss of life and wider suffering. In spite of the sacrifices made by so many, peace has remained fragile and something we can never take for granted.

Jesus said, 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you'. (John 14.27). That promise of peace given by Jesus is something we can all receive, and we all have the opportunity to cherish it. To accept and honour peace requires a lot of commitment, selflessness, respect for difference and the ability to resist the beguiling temptation to abuse power.

Peace is a gift that must be carefully cherished – or we lose it. As we prepare to mark Remembrance Sunday this year, people of all ages are making poppies which will form a poppy waterfall in Holy Trinity church. They will be different shapes and sizes and made using many different materials both new and recycled. There will be no judgement on the 'right' size or the 'best' method. This is an initiative which celebrates variety within this community of Longlevens.

I pray that the sense of togetherness and community reflect-ed in the poppy waterfall, will be a sign of commitment to work together to preserve harmony and peace as we accept and rejoice in difference.

Peace be with you,

Gwyneth