

November is for Remembering

By Heather Ford Lark

I always feel that November is a month of remembering. In fact, the word ‘remember’ even rhymes with November. When I was a child we all knew the ditty:

‘Remember, remember, the 5th of November, gunpowder, treason and plot.

I see no reason why gunpowder treason should ever be forgot.’

I eagerly looked forward to family fireworks in the garden, followed the next day by indoor fireworks on the dining room table to celebrate my brother’s birthday.

The Church begins the month with another event where we remember: All Saints Day, a day to honour all who have lived and died in faith, all those who have gone on before us, the well-known and those scarcely known at all, except to God and a few others.

It is a reminder that our faith was never meant to be a journey travelled alone. We are part of an ongoing living story, one shaped by generations of believers who trusted God through joy and sorrow, through clarity and uncertainty, from Bible times to the present day and stretching into the future. Remembering them is about recognizing that our faith is, in many ways, a gift passed down through their prayers, sacrifices, and steadfastness.

To remember can be to call to mind not just what God has done for us, but what God has done through others—those faithful men and women who have gone before us, leaving footprints of courage and faith, along the path we now walk.

I am forever grateful for my parents sharing their love of God with me from my earliest days, for friends who modelled the reality of God in their daily lives. A couple of years ago, I visited a church in Gloucestershire where several of my ancestors are named on

plaques in the church. It was a wonderful reminder of the legacy they left, people in my own family line before me who had also loved and followed God – perhaps even prayed for the generations yet to come.

And this coming Sunday is Remembrance Day for those who gave their lives for our freedoms in the first and second world wars, and in wars since then.

Gratitude grows when we pause to look back and trace the thread of God's goodness through the people and moments that have shaped us.

And yet, remembering is not always easy. Sometimes it brings tears—reminders of those we have lost, reminders of prayers unanswered, reminders of seasons that will never return. But even this kind of remembering can be holy. For in grief, gratitude can still bloom. When we thank God for someone's influence in our life, even if they are gone, we acknowledge that love never truly ends.

Next Sunday, we pause in stillness on Remembrance Day. For two minutes our busyness is silenced — two minutes that carry the weight of generations. We remember the men and women who laid down their lives in wars past and present, those who gave everything so that others might live in peace. The silence is sacred, not only because of what we remember, but because of how we remember — with gratitude, with sorrow, and with hope.

We remember the cost of conflict, the brokenness of a world that too often forgets the way of peace. We remember the courage of those who served, the grief of those who stayed behind, and the countless prayers whispered- and heard by God- in the midst of fear and loss. And yet, even as we honour their sacrifice, we look beyond the sorrow toward the hope that defines our faith.

As we lay wreaths, light candles, or stand in silence, may we also lift our eyes to Jesus, the Prince of Peace. For one day, the prophet Isaiah tells us, "Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore" (Isaiah 2:4). That day is the hope we cling to — the promise of a world restored under the reign of Christ.

Until then, we remember. We remember with tears and thanksgiving.

And we remember, above all, the One who conquered death itself, so that one day, every tear will be wiped away. (Revelation 21 v 4).