

A few words from the vicarage ...



The reaction to our Remembrance Sunday service was really quite overwhelming. This service has always held a very important place for me in the church calendar and it was encouraging to have so many supportive comments afterwards from those who were able to attend on the day itself.

It is right and proper that we do remember on this day, not only those who have fought bravely for their country, but also all who have supported them – their families and friends – and this was very much the theme adopted on this occasion.

Of course, this service followed closely our services for *All Saints' Day* and *All Souls' Day* – two further occasions when we have good cause to remember. *All Saints* is that day when we remember all the recognised along with the unrecognised saints – those unsung heroes who have served the church over the years in so many ways; who have helped us all to have such a healthy and vibrant Christian church and community. This was marked by celebrating with Holy Communion, a service of remembrance in its own unique way through the breaking of bread and sharing the cup – commemorating the last supper and Christ's bequest to us all in that self same act.

Then we had a very simple service of Night Prayer – otherwise known as Compline - which turned out to be an incredibly moving time as we came together in the Lady Chapel in the quiet of the evening for *All Souls' Day*. We each lit a candle amidst the silence and had a time for personal reflection. In the busyness of modern living, such times are few and far between

– so, to be able to take time out from all that our oft-times hectic lives throw at us, to sit in the stillness and communicate with God as the candles flickered – the candles representing once again for us, Jesus, the light of the world being present – it was a very special time.

It seems fitting that we then had *Remembrance Sunday* as the final chapter for this time of reflection and who will forget the significance of Armistice Day this year falling on 11.11.11?

Those words, ‘*we will remember them*’ ring out loudly and we must always strive to remember – for it is when we forget that we begin to make mistakes, the same mistakes made in the past, and we simply cannot allow such awful events ever to occur again. The ongoing conflicts in which our country is engaged in other parts of the world we can only hope and pray that their lessons will be learned and they will soon be over.

Now, we have a new year in church life, new opportunities for new growth. Throughout Advent we prepare for Christmas and we remind ourselves that it is no accident that **Christmas** begins with **Christ**. We need to keep Christ at the centre of all that we do and all that we are.

From the vicarage, I send to each of you every blessing and best wishes for a truly Holy and Happy Christmas.

Your Vicar,
Fr D.