

COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2023 – 3 before ADVENT: REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

COLLECT

Almighty Father,
whose will is to restore all things
in your beloved Son, the King of all:
govern the hearts and minds of those in authority,
and bring the families of the nations,
divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin,
to be subject to his just and gentle rule;
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Psalm 23

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd; ♦
therefore can I lack nothing.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures ♦
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He shall refresh my soul ♦
and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; ♦
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; ♦
you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.
- 6 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, ♦
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans 8, verses 31-39

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

'For your sake we are being killed all day long;

we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (only at the Eucharist)

Alleluia! Alleluia!

No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.

Alleluia.

At the Eucharist only:

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John, chapter 15, verses 9-17

Glory to you, O Lord

[At Morning Prayer: A reading from the gospel according to John: 15.9-17]

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

[At Morning Prayer

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

This is the word of the Lord

Praise to you, O Christ.

Thanks be to God.]

A Reflection from Peter...

Who would have thought it? The war in Ukraine continues; the war between Israel and Gaza could so easily escalate into an even more disastrous loss of life and hope; and tensions between China, Russia, Iran and the West rumble on... It is at such a moment that we stop to remember. And we remember not to be paralysed by the horrors of war – unbelievably terrible though they are – but to harness all our energies for peace and reconciliation. Such a moment requires a new honesty: it demands that we face up to the violence and cruelty that lies just beneath the surface. From the moment that a slight disagreement in the playground spills over into a vicious fight to the way in which a terrorist attack provokes a response in which many innocent lives are lost we are constantly reminded of the thin line between reasonable, thoughtful action and impetuous violence.

God alone is wholly good and desires only the good. Today's Gospel sets before us a way forward that can seem unattainable. In human terms, relying on human effort alone it is. But as the Gospel puts it, 'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you, abide in my love.' The invitation to participate in the life of God is an invitation to stretch out our hands and touch a possibility that does indeed make the world new. 'You are my friends,' says Jesus. 'I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.' This is not an invitation to find a safe refuge for ourselves – rather as the people of Gaza are desperately seeking somewhere to be safe from the onslaught – but to become agents of a new world in which we all learn 'to love one another.'