

## Readings for Remembrance Sunday

13<sup>th</sup> November 2022

### First Reading: Job 19:21-27a

Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends,  
for the hand of God has touched me!  
Why do you, like God, pursue me,  
never satisfied with my flesh?  
“O that my words were written down!  
O that they were inscribed in a book!  
O that with an iron pen and with lead  
they were engraved on a rock forever!  
For I know that my Redeemer lives,  
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth;  
and after my skin has been thus destroyed,  
then in my flesh I shall see God,  
whom I shall see on my side,  
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.

### Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:51-57

Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

“Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

“Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Gospel: St John 6:37-40

Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.”

## A Reflection for Remembrance Sunday

Many of us will be attending or participating in Acts of Remembrance on November 11<sup>th</sup> or on this Remembrance Sunday. Whilst few of us remember the Second World War, this year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Falklands War, something many of us will remember. And of course, this year, we are all conscious of the ongoing war in Ukraine as well as the many other conflicts that continue around the world.

I recently came across the following poem, written by Lucy Whitmell in 1915, *Christ in Flanders*. It speaks of those days of the First World War, but much of what it says seems to me to be timeless and beyond just times of war and remembrance. I offer it to you for reflection today.

### Christ in Flanders

We had forgotten You, or very nearly —  
You did not seem to touch us very nearly—  
Of course we thought about You now and then;  
Especially in any time of trouble —  
We knew that You were good in time of trouble—  
But we are very ordinary men.

And there were always other things to think of —  
There's lots of things a man has got to think of—  
His work, his home, his pleasure, and his wife ;  
And so we only thought of You on Sunday —  
Sometimes, perhaps, not even on a Sunday —  
Because there's always lots to fill one's life.

And, all the while, in street or lane or byway —  
In country lane, in city street, or byway —  
You walked among us, and we did not see.  
Your feet were bleeding as You walked our pavements —  
How *did* we miss Your footprints on our pavements? —  
Can there be other folk as blind as we?

*Now* we remember; over here in Flanders —  
(It isn't strange to think of You in Flanders) —  
This hideous warfare seems to make things clear.  
We never thought about You much in England —  
But now that we are far away from England,  
We have no doubts, we know that You are here.

You helped us pass the jest along the trenches —  
Where, in cold blood, we waited in the trenches —  
You touched its ribaldry and made it fine.  
You stood beside us in our pain and weakness —  
We're glad to think You understand our weakness —  
Somehow it seems to help us not to whine.

We think about You kneeling in the Garden —  
Ah! God! the agony of that dread Garden —  
We know You prayed for us upon the Cross.  
If anything could make us glad to bear it —  
'Twould be the knowledge that You willed to bear it —  
Pain — death — the uttermost of human loss.

Though we forgot You — You will not forget us —  
We feel so sure that You will not forget us —  
But stay with us until this dream is past.  
And so we ask for courage, strength, and pardon —  
Especially, I think, we ask for pardon —  
And that You'll stand beside us to the last.

*Lucy Whitmell, 1915*