

9.30am Parish Communion, Dunsfold
10.45am Gather at war memorial
11am Observe 2 minutes silence

Please remember in your prayers
The Sick: Marilyn Bailey, Sandra Baxter-Brown, Ginny Fraser, Jacquie Griffiths, Fr Shane Griffiths, Pat Higgins, Stacey Medalyer, Dean Perkins and Hazel Wiltshire.

Sunday's service
Please join us for our Service of Remembrance at St Mary's, beginning at **9.30am**. Following the service, we will gather at the War Memorial for the Act of Remembrance.

Everyone is welcome to attend either or both parts of the morning, and refreshments will be served at The Sun afterwards.

BIG DUNSFOLD CHURCH CLEAN
PLEASE JOIN US ON 14th NOVEMBER

We are repeating our "big church clean" work party to get the church ready for Advent and Christmas. All volunteers are welcome to give the church (and, weather depending, the churchyard) a deep clean and spruce-up. We will gather 10am-12:30 with plenty of tea and cake breaks in between, but please stay as long as you like. **Please can you help us?** Let Sue Simper know: susansimper88@btinternet.com. If you aren't up for cleaning, help with making and/or serving refreshments would be very welcome too - there's a job for everyone who wants one! Thank you.





Dunsfold Pop-Up stall
We will next pop-up on Saturday 7th November 10am-12 midday, with jigsaws, advent calendars, plants and bakes for sale. You'll also find details of our upcoming church services and events, and there will always be a friendly face to welcome you. We hope to see you there! Our next pop-up stall after November will be at the shop's December Christmas Fayre, before we take a little break for winter.

Never Again
Last week I followed government advice and went out to purchase bottled water, canned goods and charged batteries in preparation. Quite what I am preparing for, I am not entirely sure. Nevertheless, Catherine and I are ready, with emergency rations to survive a few days. Thankfully, we have a plentiful supply of wine, so in a prolonged emergency our calorie intake will be supplemented by Sauvignon Blanc. Yet the shopping trip felt strangely sobering. As I surveyed the suspiciously empty shelves of bottled water, I was reminded that, despite all our technological advances, the anxieties that drive human behaviour have changed little. In the context of Remembrance, it struck me that humanity still seems remarkably adept at repeating the mistakes of the past. Remembrance conjures up familiar phrases: “Lest we forget” and “Never again”. They are powerful words, born from sacrifice and suffering, and intended to shape a better future. And yet I felt thoroughly depressed following my shopping excursion. So it was that I began scouring the internet for Remembrance positivity and I came across this beautiful devotional by Chris Davi, verger at St James’s, Piccadilly. I love his message of hope in troubling times, and thought there was real value in sharing the piece in Pews News.

Reflecting on the Importance of Remembrance in a World Longing for Peace
Chris Davi Verger of St James’s, Piccadilly talks about creating a collective act of defiance

“*Good luck everyone.*”

The last words of Rowan Atkinson’s character, Captain Blackadder in the closing episode of the final series of the BBC sitcom Blackadder. Set in the trenches of the First World War, the series sees Blackadder and his clueless friends embark on a host of cunning plans in an attempt to avoid being sent ‘over the top’, including posing as chefs and cooking a stomach-churning meal for their commanding officers, claiming to be a gifted artist in order to get re-assigned to a comfortable posting behind the lines and, of course, the infamous shooting of the General’s beloved carrier pigeon Speckled Jim!



However, the comedy ends abruptly and poignantly in the last moments of the final episode of the final series. There are no more excuses to be found, no more options to be explored. Time is up. All realise that there’s no way out except up the ladders and out into the unknown of no-man’s-land. They go up with a roar and charge into a hail of gunfire, the picture now in slow-motion, and a mournful, lamenting rendition of the Blackadder theme plays. Slowly the battlefield scene fades into a field of red poppies and the sound of birdsong, shrouding the fate of our heroes, but leaving us under no illusions as to what happened next.



I have been keenly interested in the First World War ever since my teens when I learned about two of my own family who were killed in the conflict. Bernard Rallison, killed in 1916, and his older brother, Victor, in 1917. Two young men out of millions who went to war and never returned. Wanting to know more about them, caught up in the chaos of a watershed moment in history, led me to visit the battlefields where they died. There, among the seas of white headstones, in beautifully tended cemeteries which contrast so starkly with the seas of mud and filth and blood where they died, I found their final resting places.

There is often much debate over the place of Remembrance Sunday or of Armistice Day, even the wearing of a red poppy as a symbol of remembrance in a society that so often wants to look forward rather than back, particularly in the context of Britain's often unpalatable imperial history. Here is not the place to have that discussion, but I have always considered it profoundly important to take time to look back, not only to honour those who served and those who continue to serve, but also to acknowledge the cost of war. The Armistice of 1918, the ceasefire of the 'war to end all wars', was, tragically, not the final chapter in the chronicle of the conflicts of humanity. Warfare endures, civilians are now more often the casualties, men women and children experiencing death, trauma and suffering alongside military personnel.

This then begs the question, 'Why continue to remember?' Why remember the failure of lasting peace on 11th November? The very worst of humanity was revealed less than a generation after the Armistice with the industrialisation of genocide by the Nazi regime as more than 6 million Jews and other minority groups were murdered in the Holocaust, and to this day, the scourge of war continues to kill and maim the innocent and displace millions across the globe.

The answer, I believe, is that the act of remembering is an act of defiance, and an example of the inextinguishable optimism of the human spirit. Remembering that, at one brief, optimistic moment, the world said "enough" and the guns stopped. It did not last; but it is an act of sheer will to believe that it could. That one day, as the prophets Micah and Isaiah prophesied, weapons of war would be beaten into harvester's tools, that wars would cease and peace would reign. It may seem impossible; it may BE impossible; but so too was the flowering of a poppy on the battlefields of the First World War. Delicate, blood-red petals, on slender stems springing defiantly from the shattered ground in the middle of hell on earth. Life refusing to flee in the face of death and human folly. The hope that they represented, now symbolised in the poppy of remembrance.

As we gather in the coming week to remember the dead, the wounded and those traumatised by conflict past and present, as we give thanks for those who continue to serve, I hope that we too can show the same kind of stubborn defiance as the poppy, and blossom for peace. It won't happen soon but let's refuse to accept that it never will. And until it does… we will remember them; we must remember them.

"Good luck everyone"