

**ANGLICAN CHAPLAINCY OF ALL SAINTS' MARSEILLE
WITH AIX-EN-PROVENCE AND THE LUBERON**

Sermon – Third Sunday before Advent

Remembrance Sunday

9th November 2025

All Saints' Marseille

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As we stand in remembrance today, we hold together grief and gratitude. We remember lives given, promises broken by war, and the cost of peace. We remember names once spoken with love, and we feel again the weight of loss that every generation knows.

Our readings this morning do not speak of war or the great silences people keep today, yet they take us straight to the heart of what remembrance invites us to face. In Luke's Gospel, the Sadducees come to Jesus with a question about resurrection. They do not come to learn. They come to trap him. Still, their question lingers in every honest human heart. What becomes of those who have died? What is left when the music stops, the battle ends, the body is laid in the earth?

Jesus answers with a single, steady truth: "He is not God of the dead but of the living, for to him all of them are alive." The covenant love of God, the "I am" of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, does not falter at the threshold of death. To God, the dead are alive, for his love holds them beyond our sight.

That same faith steadied the Thessalonians when they were shaken by rumours and fear. Paul writes to them of "eternal comfort and good

hope.” A comfort rooted not in sunny reassurances but in Christ risen. A hope that looks beyond every grave.

And yet hope does not come easily these days.

For our remembrance is not only a bringing-to-mind. It is a binding-together of what has been torn apart. To re-member is to put together again what has been dis-membered through the evil and sorrow of war. After the First World War, many believed that once humanity had seen what its own ingenuity could unleash, such horror would never be repeated. Recent history, and the daily news that reaches our homes, tells a different story. Conflicts intensify. Hatreds rekindle. Peacemakers grow weary.

Are we caught in endless cycles of unrest and violence? How could those who stand for what is good and just not feel exhausted at times?

Yet today, as we remember the fallen and all who have died in war, we do not stand as people without hope. We remember in the light of Christ’s resurrection, trusting that life, not death, speaks the final word.

And in these tumultuous and angry times, remembrance asks something of us. It calls us not only to look back, but to live differently now. To live humble, considerate lives. Lives that are impartial and sincere. Lives shaped by mercy and good fruit. To expect such qualities not only of ourselves but of our leaders, and all who speak in our name. In our families, our workplaces, our community, we are called to choose generosity over suspicion, kindness over fear, welcome over exclusion.

This is part of how we honour the sacrifice of those who died at war to protect our freedoms and our future: to work for peace, to refuse the slow habits of hatred, to become in our own time signs of that living hope that death can never destroy.

At the beginning of the Second World War, King George VI ended his Christmas message with words from a poem by Minnie Haskins. He offered them to a nation staring into the unknown. “I said to the man who stood at the Gate of the Year, ‘Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.’ And he replied, ‘Go out into the darkness, and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light, and safer than a known way.’”

That is the hand we take today. The hand that holds all who have fallen. The hand that leads us toward peace. The hand that reminds us that to God, all of them are alive.

May that hope steady us, guide us, and teach us how to live. Amen.