

## Coop's Scoops # 124 Tuesday November 10, 2020



Tomorrow is Remembrance Day, Nov 11, 2020. In other years, many of us would be at the cenotaphs in our communities, gathering together to remember those who served, and those who sacrificed in the Great Wars, the Korean War, The war in Afghanistan, Desert Storm, and other conflicts around our world where Canadians have served as combatants and as peacekeepers. This year, large gatherings are not encouraged and poppies have had to be purchased by virtual donation ( google Canadian Legion poppies to find a site where you can do just that). I'm offering some prayers and

remembrances in today's Scoops which you may wish to use tomorrow at 11am. There will be a ten-person service of Eucharist and Remembrance at 10am November 11 in Browning Hall. There are two places left....call the office if you would like to come ( 645 -3486). There will be **NO SERVICE at the Cenotaph**, but an on-line service will be held on Cogeco Channel 10 if you have that carrier.

### **A little bit of History impacting the Present in the USA:**

At the conclusion of the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln was berated by his own party for receiving "enemy" leaders and treating them with civility and kindness. His response to public censure was to say " Treating enemies with courtesy is the one certain way to vanquish them....do they not cease to be my enemy when they become my friend?" In his acceptance speech, President Elect Joe Biden stated "We have to move beyond treating our opponents as enemies, we are all Americans". Healthy disagreement, differences of opinion, all of these things make for debate in public forums. We continue to pray for the healing of the nation of the USA, and for all Americans ( all people!) to eschew violence, ridicule and threat as means of "communication".

**Cartoons don't always have to be Funny!:**



**That is powerful! Amen!**

**Scripture for the day: Isaiah 2:4**

And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into **plowshares**, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. (Isaiah 2:4)

**Homily:**

This morning we turn our thoughts and our hearts to Remembrance Day. And that is good, but it becomes if it happens more than once a year on Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>.

Remembering is not something to be trotted out occasionally, it is the habitual turning of our minds to that which has gone before. Remembering past struggles and griefs and how we coped can build our courage; remembering past joys and

celebrations can build our hope and our endurance. Tragedy will never be forgotten, but neither will our first kiss or the birth of a child.

Remembrance Day however fulfils the special purpose of honouring those who have served in our armed forces, those who made the Supreme Sacrifice, those who were wounded physically, those who survived but were also grievously wounded, those who served back at home. Our minds can't help but think of the suffering...the rain, the mud, the mustard gas, the bombs, the mortal wounds, the prisoners of war, the families still at home- hoping and praying and working so hard to raise children mostly missing their dads but some missing their moms, also working overseas in capacities from nursing, to coding, to piloting. We remember that those who marched off in World War One **believed with all their hearts** that they would fight and win the war which would forever end all wars. Noble aims. Amazing deeds. And win they did. But sadly not forever. Along came World War 2 and Korea and Viet Nam and Afghanistan and Desert Storm and the far flung wars confronting ISIS and the genocides, and injustices. The prophet Amos spoke about beating spears into ploughshares 600 years before Jesus was born. I could not begin to list all the wars since that long ago time. There seems to be something quite intrinsic in the human heart that turns quite readily toward power as the first response to challenging crises. And the abuse of power never ends well for the common people who wind up fighting the resulting battles. There is also, however, something intrinsically beautiful in the human heart. Something beautiful that refuses to give up on ideals and searches for hope no matter what. Jesus spoke about it when He said "Greater love has no man (or woman) than to lay down one's life for one's friend". (John 15: 13) Paul later writes in Romans "Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." There is evidently something intrinsically even more wonderful in Jesus heart! (I pause here to point out that my computer has started highlight, and will NOT stop even though I've edited and cancelled it twice. Sigh. Time for an upgrade. Meanwhile we'll continue with this lovely sort of beige behind the words.)

The veterans of all our wars spoke most eloquently when they returned from war about ideals. That love was the greatest gift indeed. That service was the highest form of citizenship. They went to our schools and taught our children about honour,

and loyalty, and courage. They taught there were in fact some things worth dying for. They spoke of how bonds of affection developed through being comrades and how a joke or a good story lightened their hearts even in the trenches. Their gifts to us were not ALL given in war, they have graced us with their teaching and example during PEACE. They merit our gratitude and honour, and I hope they or their children or their children's children receive it on this Remembrance Day.

( My goodness, the highlighting finally stopped! ) So, when we “Remember”, we are called to look back certainly, and honour and be thankful for the sacrifice and heroism. But we also need to look forward into a future where those very ideals can be achieved in every place and every country and for every person under the sun. That task belongs to those men and women NOW serving and to future generations who will pick up the torch and carry it on to make peace in our world. Jesus Himself lived His life according to His ideals....He called them His Beatitudes.

The young Jewish teenager Anne Frank, while hiding in a tiny room in the home of a Christian family, wrote in her journal these amazing words: “It really is a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can't build my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery and death. I see the world gradually turned into a wilderness. I hear the ever approaching thunder, which will destroy us, too. I can feel the suffering of millions and yet, when I look up into the heavens, I think that it will all come right, that this cruelty too will end and that peace and tranquility will return again. In the meantime, I must uphold my ideals, for perhaps the time will come when I shall be able to carry them out.” These words were one of her last entries, before she and her family were taken to Auschwitz where they perished.

We are not at war in this country right now, but we are in the midst of a grave battle we've never fought before and do not know for sure how to win. In looking to our Veterans we can take heart, and learn how to behave in this pandemic. Surely if they were called to possibly give up their lives for their neighbours, we can wear a mask and forego some things we loved to do for our neighbours. Surely we can do what the science specialists, our pandemic Generals, if you will, tell us to do. Surely we can look up our marching orders in Matthew

chapter 6, straight from the King Himself! And we go into the future knowing that our God is with us every difficult or joyful step of the way. When Jesus comes to make all things right, those swords will indeed be turned into ploughshares forever.

We bless all who served and continue to serve in our military! And we bless our God for all His love, compassion and mercy until He comes! Amen.

Prayer:

O God, by whose mercy the faithful departed find rest, look kindly on your departed veterans who gave their lives in the service of their country. Grant that through the passion, death, and resurrection of your Son they may share in the joy of your heavenly kingdom and rejoice in you with your saints forever.

Bless all who suffered grievous wounds, imprisonment, and trauma who returned from war to begin the long process of healing and renewal. Bless those still working toward wellness. Bless families who grieve for loved ones. Bless families who are anxious for their members now serving in our military. Grant peace in our time, O Lord, and evermore mightily defend us. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Dear God, we confess that we are frightened by our helplessness in the face of natural disasters like hurricanes and human disasters like war and pandemics. We pray, dear God, for our safety and the safety of our loved ones. We pray, dear God, for the safety of all who stand in harm's way.

But if there is no escape yet from tumult, we pray that we will never forget that you are standing in the midst of it with us, that you will never desert us, that you will offer us unlimited comfort and strength to face what must be faced, and do what must be done.

We pray, dear God, to remember that in times of storm or calm, in war or in peace, we are all neighbors dependent on one another for our survival. And before the next storm comes, dear God, remind us to ask the eternal questions.

Are the storms that come a product of our sinful disregard for your world that has led to global warming, food chain contamination, undrinkable water and unbreathable air?

Have we failed to see that some of our neighbors are more vulnerable to the storm because of age, disability or economic restraints?

And when the storm passes, do we lose sight of what we must do to protect one another and be better neighbors to one another? When the storm approaches, dear God, let our first thoughts be of our neighbors who face the same fate.

And whatever happens in the storm, dear God, hold on to us, preserve our faith, and use us. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen. (adpt....National Council of Churches).

Blessing: Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord knowing that the blessing of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are upon you this day and evermore. Amen.

