

A Remembrance Assembly

By Fiona Walton

This could be shortened. The readings are intended to be delivered by pupils.



Welcome

Welcome to our Remembrance Service.

This morning we will be remembering the sacrifices made by so many in times of war. We will do this with gratitude and respect, in silence and with music.

We will be thinking about the friendships that can be formed in war time. We will contemplate the courage soldiers need. We will also be considering the roles that hope, peace, faith, prayer and forgiveness play in times of conflict.

Friendship

Jesus said: 'Love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends'.

In World War I Pals battalions or groups of soldiers were formed so that men could fight alongside their friends. This meant though that whole communities lost their men, which was painful.

Many soldiers form very close friendships with their comrades.

Pause

Who are your friends? Be thankful for their friendship.

Pause

Courage

Jesus prayed for courage in Gethsemane. He said: 'not my will, but yours God'.

There are many stories of courage in wartime. Here are a few:



A priest called Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy volunteered as a chaplain on the Western Front during World War I. He was awarded the Military Cross for his courage, running into No Man's Land to help the wounded.

Edith Cavell was a Christian nurse in World War I. She worked in enemy occupied Belgium. She helped 200 allied soldiers to escape. She was put to death for her bravery.

Captain Noel Chavasse was a doctor in World War I. He did medical work all day then went with the stretcher bearers into No Man's Land at night to collect the wounded. He went within 20 metres of the German trenches. He is one of only three people to be given two Victoria Cross medals!

Desmond Doss was a Christian soldier who refused to carry a gun. He rescued 75 men from Hacksaw Ridge in Japan in World War II.



Image courtesy of
Desmond Doss
Council

Pause

What do you need courage for?

Pause.

Remembrance Day Child (song):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjUpu00DLVw>

Hope

Many soldiers find hope in the Bible. The Bible says: 'To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of the things we cannot see'.

Even in the most frightening of times there is always hope.

In war time the hope of seeing family, returning home, the war ending and the hope of peace kept people going.

Pause

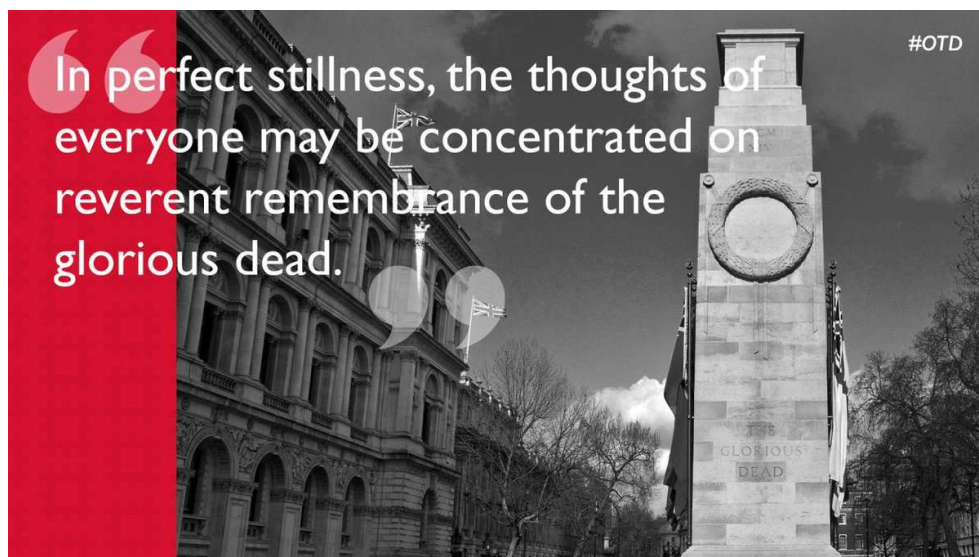
What do you hope for?

Pause

Let us stand to sing, "Our God in ages past, our hope for years to come".

Silence

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up and slipped out to a quiet place to pray alone.



World War I ended at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918. That was 104 (*amend as needed*) years ago today. In 1919 King George V

asked for a two-minute silence. Every year since then silence has been observed.

Sometimes people who are silent can find it easier to think or are more aware of God's presence.

Pause

Do you like silence or do you find it hard?

Pause

Act of Remembrance

It is time for our act of remembrance. We remember with gratitude and respect the sacrifices made by so many in times of war across many years.

“They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,

We will remember them.”

From ‘For the Fallen’ by Laurence Binyon.

All affirm: We will remember them

Last Post - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=McCDWYgVyys>

Silence – 2 minutes

Reveille - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8r5leh0OuQY>

Forgiveness

Jesus said: ‘Forgive your enemies and pray for those who persecute you’.



In 1940, during World War II, Coventry Cathedral was bombed. The words 'Father Forgive' were written on the wall behind the altar of the ruined church. These words are prayed every weekday in the new cathedral.

When a war has finished, peace starts with people who are willing to forgive their enemies and let go of bitterness. This can take years of hard work.

Pause

Is there anyone you need to forgive?

Pause

Peace

Jesus said: 'Peace I live with you, my peace I give to you'.

In every war people long for peace. At the end of a war it takes time to work peace out.

The peace at the end of World War I was signed in a railway carriage in France.

The Paris Peace Treaties following the end of World War II in 1945 were not signed until 1947.

Pause

Is there anyone you need to make peace with?

Pause

Let us stand to sing "Abide with me".

Prayer

The Bible says: 'Pray continually'.

Prayer was a comfort to many soldiers who were frightened and far from home.

Prayer was also a comfort for those left at home. In 1940 when Britain was close to defeat in World War II and the entire British Army was trapped at Dunkirk, King George VI asked people to turn back to God and he declared a National Day of Prayer. Millions of people across the British Isles flocked into churches to pray. There were large queues outside churches and cathedrals as people waited to go inside to pray.

A violent storm arose over the Dunkirk region grounding the Luftwaffe. Then a great calm descended on the which allowed hundreds of tiny boats to sail across and rescue 335,000 soldiers. People referred to what happened as "*the miracle of Dunkirk*".

Pause

Is there anything in your life that you might like to pray for help with?

Pause

The Prayers

This prayer was written to use at Remembrance Services.

'Let us pray,

Lord, strengthen our hearts, hands and minds, to work together for peace; to see you in one another,

And to seek your kingdom above all things;

That your will may be seen to be done,

And your kingdom come, through Jesus Christ, the Lord of lords and king of kings.

Amen.'