

# Remembrance Reflections

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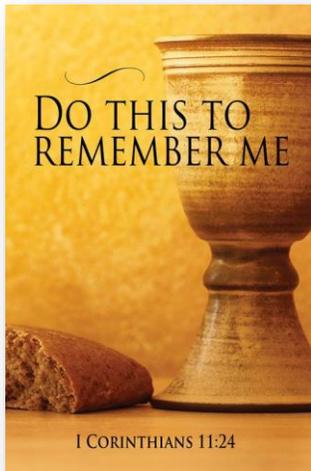
Remembrance Day is still large in the minds of Canadians. However, as a generation of men and women who served in the 20th C. conflicts pass on, the power of their testimonies fade with them. The refrain “Lest we forget...” is a poignant reminder for us to remember the sacrifices made to defend our freedoms!



Likewise in the Church, remembrance is a significant dynamic to maintain the vibrancy of our walk with God. Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of Me...” The Greek word for remembrance is ‘anamnesis.’ This means “bringing a past event vividly into the present.” In one sense, it is the opposite of ‘amnesia’ where one forgets the past...

The word ‘anamnesis’ is such a robust concept that it has been adopted in the marketplace. Business writers use the term to capture the creative energy released when a company is formed. As a company wanes and loses focus, consultants attempt to revive the organization by reaffirming the original vision and dynamism. This is often accomplished by re-articulating the experience of the founders.

The mainline Church in the West is in sharp decline. One of the ways to revitalize our communities is through ‘anamnesis.’ We need to celebrate the power of Jesus’ Resurrection over sin and death. The early witnesses of Jesus’ return from death were powerfully transformed by encountering the risen Lord. We celebrate Emmanuel – God with us! And His work of transforming lives continues today... forgiving sins (1 John 1:9), offering life eternal (John 3:16), etc.



I recently prayed for a lovely life-long Anglican at the altar rail following the Eucharist. She felt heat as the power of God coursed through her body, bringing His presence and healing. Afterwards she commented on the impact of this experience. I suggested that she share this with her rector. She responded, “Oh, I couldn’t do that!” I retorted, “Why not?” She said, “I’m an Anglican!”

As a young priest, I met with a senior priest in our diocese over lunch. He shared with me how he had a powerful encounter with Christ that led him to become a priest. I was almost knocked off my chair with this amazing testimony! I asked if he has ever shared this with his people. He simply responded, “Of course not!” No wonder an Arctic Anglican Bishop stated, “When it comes to Anglicans witnessing, we’re like the MacKenzie River – we’re frozen at the mouth!”

‘Anamnesis’ may be accomplished, in part through personal witness – how God’s love expressed in Christ has transformed our lives! The well-known Anglican Theologian John Stott noted, “Nothing shuts the mouth, ties the tongue, seals the lips more than our lack of spiritual experience. We do not witness because we have no witness to bear!” Tough words but sadly true!

However, the Lord IS INDEED at work in our midst!! Jesus still transforms lives, forgives sin, heals body, spirit and soul, mends broken marriages, offers hope and eternal life... and oh, so much more!!

In a couple of my parishes, we introduced at the announcements - “God Time.” This was an opportunity for people to share encounters with the living God – brief, poignant, and positive. These were planned at first but later became a natural part of our ethos. Maybe this can happen in your parish? Celebrate ‘anamnesis!’