

were doubtless looking forward to a time when the war would be over. It is for those of us who were spared and for those who were born after those terrible times to build on the opportunities afforded by the present so that their sacrifice was not in vain.

So remembrance then, in its most positive form, is a looking back to the past in order to prepare for the future. Of course while this particularly Sunday is called Remembrance Sunday there is an ongoing process of Remembrance that underlies the whole of the Church's worship. As we read our Bible each Sunday our minds are brought to consider events and conditions prevailing two, three or even four thousand years ago. We don't consider them simply as events in the past. We believe they have an impact on our ~~ex~~ lives now and that they may help us to live out our lives as more faithful servants of God in the future. The words spoken by our Lord to Martha as she mourned the death of her brother, Lazarus, were spoken to a particular woman in a particular situation of grief. As we read them, as we remember them, we know that

## REMEMBRANCE DAY

This Sunday, Remembrance Sunday, our thoughts turn for a short while to those who have died in the wars of this century. There are those here in this Church who have very personal memories of wartime. Memories of experiences, memories of comrades who fell. What I want to do this morning, in the next few minutes, is to think about the part remembrance plays in our lives and in our faith. There has been a move over the last few years to broaden the frame of reference of Remembrance Day to include those who have given their lives while serving in peace keeping operations with the United Nations and over the past ten years our thoughts are inevitably drawn to the appalling toll of life in Ireland.

Surely one mistake that must be learned in Ireland is the futility of remembering the past only in order to rake up old hatreds and animosities; rekindle old battles. If remembrance is only aimed at looking back to the past in order to relive the past then it is a futile and rather pathetic exercise. The men who died

learned from the past in the present, to  
build for the future, that we may look  
forward with the prophet Isaiah in the  
hope:

He shall judge between the peoples and  
shall decide for many peoples;  
and they shall beat their swords into  
ploughshares  
and their spears into pruning hooks;  
nation shall not lift up sword against  
nation,  
neither shall they learn war any more.

they are spoken to us, as some of us  
remember friends and loved ones who have  
died.

St Paul, in speaking of the Holy Communion,  
which we celebrate here this morning, wrote  
'For as often as you eat this bread and  
drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's  
death until he comes'. The communion,  
among other things a remembrance of our  
Lord's death, looks back to an event in  
history, the death of a man on a cross  
outside Jerusalem. In partaking of the  
communion we affirm the relevance of that  
event for us now and we look to the final  
coming of our Lord.

Remembrance then, a looking back to the  
past to build for the future. So this  
morning we remember all who have died at  
the hands of men, in Europe, in Asia,  
in Africa and in our own land. In  
remembering let us give thanks to God  
for those who gave their lives, pray ~~for~~  
for their families and for the families  
of those whose lives were taken from them.  
Let us look back to the past to learn from  
the past. May we apply the lessons we have