

November magazine.

We come now to November - the month of remembering. We begin with 'All Saints', when we remember the lives of the saints, then 'All Hallows', when we remember those whom we love and who have entered into glory, and then 'Remembrance Day' when we specifically remember those who gave their lives in conflicts to preserve the freedom we enjoy today.

Shakespeare wrote, "*There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray, love, remember.*" (*Hamlet IV:5*). What happens when we 'remember'? Nothing is more mysterious or harder to explain than this thing we call memory, nerve cells with little threads of fibre running down between them, which hold the memories of a lifetime. When we remember, the past and the present are one in the moment that is now, we reassemble, those we have loved and lost putting them together again, bringing them out of the past and into the present. We may then discover that we can find our true self that is continuous throughout our lives. By using memory and imagination, we can *re-member* our lives, put them together again, discover the threads that bind them together and find they form a whole.

For the first Christians every Eucharist bound together both past and future; the whole Gospel is *re-membered*, *re-presented*, put together and made present again, in the 'now' of faith in all its saving power, because in the Eucharist, there is a sense in which time is transcended, a sense in which faith makes present both the past and the future, which come together in the words, 'Do this in remembrance of me.'

For to remember is not only the opposite of 'to forget'; it is also the opposite of 'to dismember'. To dismember a body is to take it apart, limb by limb. To re-member someone is to do only what God can do. When the penitent thief says to Jesus, 'Lord, remember me when you come into your Kingdom', he also says; 'Lord, remember me, recreate me, make me anew, put me together again, but now in your own likeness and as you have always intended me to be.' For to be re-membered in the end is our end, our purpose; that is why we are here. That is what every Church on earth exists to do: to bring us into the Kingdom, damaged, dysfunctional, people that we are, and to re-member us, recreate us

as the Body of Christ in the new creation that exists since that first Easter Day. We are those who seek to recognise in Christ our true likeness, our proper humanity, the person God desires us to be, and our prayer is, 'Lord, re-member me, re-fashion me, so that I may share the life of your Kingdom. Remake my life in the shape of your own.' And the answer? 'If you would truly remember me, if you would bring me out of the past into your present, then do this with bread and wine', because that is why every time we 'do this' we are re-mem-bering him, taking what lies in the past and making it present, making Him present.

Jesus revealed in time, what is eternally true, and through Him we have an eternal relationship with God which at that final moment of time, that which we call death, has no power to destroy.

May you find peace in your remembering....

Rev James