

## *Homily for Remembrance Sunday (8:15 Mass)*

9 November 2025

*Wisdom 3.1–9; Psalm 116.1–8; 1 Peter 1.3–9; John 11.21–27*

*The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them."*

— *Wisdom 3:1*

At this morning's Mass we keep Remembrance Sunday — quietly, prayerfully, before the fuller observance later in the morning; and before the Last Post is sounded or the names are read, the Church's first act is to listen to Scripture — to let God speak into our remembering.

The writer of Wisdom offers words that have comforted generations: "The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God." These lines were written for a people who had suffered, who needed to know that the lives of the faithful are not lost to the grave. They assure us that in God's keeping, death does not have the final claim; those who have fallen are held, tenderly and eternally, in the mercy of the Creator.

We hear this same confidence echoed in this morning's psalm: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his servants." It is not that death itself is precious, but that every life — known, loved, remembered — is precious to God. Each one of those whom we honour today was, and is, beloved of God.

St Peter speaks of a "living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This reminds us that hope is not wishful thinking, but is instead the steady conviction that God keeps faith with his people. Yet the promise of resurrection does not cancel grief amidst times of strife and loss, or on days like today when we remember those we love but see no longer. Instead, the promise of resurrection transfigures grief, so that tears and lament become a kind of prayer — an act of trust that love is stronger than death.

And then Jesus says in St John's Gospel: "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who believes in me will never die."

Here is the Gospel in its simplest, most beautiful form. Those who have gone before us — the soldiers of our parish, the nurses, chaplains, civilians, and all victims of war — are not lost in the void. They are gathered into the heart of Christ, who will "raise them up on the last day."

Remembrance Sunday is not only a look backward: it also calls us to live now as people of resurrection — to make peace, to act justly, to love mercy. When we remember the fallen, we best honour their memory by striving to create a world in which such sacrifice is never again demanded.

And so on this Remembrance Sunday, we bring before God all who have died in war, and those who carry its wounds in body, mind, or spirit, and we commend them to the mercy of God, praying that the peace Jesus promised may yet take root in our own hearts and in the nations of the earth.

*"The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God."*

May that truth sustain us as we keep this holy remembrance today and throughout this week — both in sorrow, in gratitude, and in hope of the day when every tear shall be wiped away, and all shall be made new in Christ, our life and our peace.

Amen.