

“For everything there is a season,” comes from the book of Ecclesiastes, with that section ending, “...a time for war and a time for peace.”

Not in that list from chapter 3, is this season: “a time to remember,” which includes: All Saints (Sutton and Thorpe churches’ dedication), All Souls, Gunpowder Plot, Armistice Day, Remembrance Sunday, St Margaret (Norton church’s dedication), St Clement (Overy church’s dedication), and several other significant saints’ days, including, for the Scots, St Andrew.

Perhaps the pragmatic writer of Ecclesiastes didn’t think it worth bothering with remembrance; after all, what is remembrance? A collection of memories? Or perhaps it’s a reminder of what can go wrong. But also an example of what can be good.

By my estimation (and I do have first-hand experience) a complacent generation has its mistakes paid for by the next one, which is usually a generation that has to learn these things all over again - as the cream of the current generation newly come-of-age (apparently, “generation Y”) is doing so now.

Hopefully, this time, someone will remember what remembrance is really for: a lesson from history that needs a response. When Jesus broke bread and shared it with his friends as a symbol of giving himself to us, he said, “Do this in remembrance of me.” He could easily have said with equal meaning, “If you really want to have the wholeness of life, you’ll take this gift - and show your thanks by what you do!” (But Jesus was much more eloquent...)

This year let’s remember that a lack of remembrance has affected what’s happening now, on a foreign field, on our behalf, for our sake. Yes, it is for our sake. If you don’t agree, you don’t understand. If you don’t understand you need to think about it more. If you won’t think about it, it’s just going to happen again.

So, was Ecclesiastes right not to bother: “...a time to remember?”