

Wreath laying
for all who have been affected by war
in their childhood

Innocent Victims' Memorial



*So much evidence of war-related trauma in children is now available
that it simply cannot be ignored*

Wednesday 22nd November 2017, 2pm



Children-in-War Memorial Day Project

We gather our prayers:

Great God, you are one God, and you bring together what is scattered and mend what is broken. Unite us with the scattered peoples of the earth that we may be one family of your children. Bind up all our wounds and heal us in spirit, that we may be renewed as God's beloved children. **Amen.**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Blessing (The Reverend Jane Sinclair, Canon in Residence)

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you now and always. **Amen.**

Welcome (The Reverend Jane Sinclair, Canon in Residence)

On behalf of the Dean and Chapter, welcome to Westminster Abbey and to the Innocent Victims' Memorial, where we remember so many who have suffered as a result of war, oppression and violence. In particular, we remember today all those who were affected by dislocation, loss of families and homes in the Second World War, children who have been imprisoned in internment camps and all those children worldwide who are affected by current wars.

Gathering (The Reverend Hugh Ellis)

The Lord be with you
And also with you

We meet in the presence of God
who knows our needs, hears our cries, feels our pain, and heals our wounds.

Welcome on behalf of the Children in War Memorial Project and Introduction (Professor Martin L. Parsons)

I had a paint-box (Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain)

I had a paint-box, Each colour glowing with delight:
I had a paint-box, Warm and cool and bright
I had no red for wounds and blood, I had no black for orphaned child.
I had no white for the face of the dead.
I had no yellow for the burning sands.
I had orange for joy and life. I had green for buds and blooms.
I had blue for clear bright skies. I had pink for dreams and rest.
I sat down and painted Peace.

Orphans of War (Sheikh Dr Ramzy)

Some time ago I went to an orphanage in Turkey.
I saw many orphans in war.
With me I had some food and some toys for them.
When I saw them, I saw the sadness in their eyes and in their little faces.
It seems they were carrying the weight of the world on their little shoulders.
I tried to cheer them up and said I have some toys for you.
They came and took them from me and went aside with no smile.
I saw a little orphan girl around 5 years old with lovely curly hair sitting in the corner and looking to nowhere.
I went to her and said salams what would you like, my little child I will get it for you. She with her little broken voice quivering mouth said I want my mum.
But her mum was dead, blown up by a bomb in the war and she saw it.
Tears started streaming down her little face. I held her and I tried to hide my tears. My heart was bleeding.
I felt her pain, oh God it was so painful.
Then I remembered the saying of Allah:

“...and you shall do good, to your parents, and to the near of kin and to the orphans and speak to people good...” (Quran 2: 83)

Prayers (The Reverend Hugh Ellis)

A prayer from the Jewish Tradition (Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain)

God of all creation, we stand in awe before You, impelled by visions of wisdom and tragic misunderstandings, of proud hopes and humble successes. Now it is time for us to meet - in memory and truth, in courage and trust, in love and promise.

In that which we share, let us see the common prayer of humanity; where we differ, let us wonder at human freedom; in our unity and our differences, let us know the uniqueness that is God.

May our courage match our convictions, and our integrity match our hope.
May our faith in You bring us closer to each other.
May our meeting with past and present bring blessing for the future.
Amen.

A prayer from the Muslim Tradition (Sheikh Dr Ramzy)

In the name of Allah, the most kind, the most Merciful.
Dear God, forgive our sins, the sins of our living and our dead, those who are with us and those who are absent.
Our God, You are peace, from You comes peace. Help us live in peace.
Dear God we ask You to bring peace and contentment to the world, and strop those who want to destroy it.
Dear God, please bring peace to our hearts, to our homes, to our societies, to our countries.
O God, please help us to bring peace to the places of war across the world, to all places that are troubled by violence and destruction.
O Allah we ask you to help the orphans. Bring happiness, love and smiles to their faces. Ease their pain and grant them peace in this life and paradise in the hereafter.
O Allah accept our prayers.

Quotations:

'...sadly, there is no end in sight for wars on this planet. The childhood sufferers of today will be the suffering adults of tomorrow. Peace stands by helplessly. There is one conclusion, which can be drawn firmly with respect to children in war time, be it victory or defeat: children tend to be the great losers overlooked by history'. (Dr Peter Heint)

Ashes and shifting sands have covered the footprints of war... (However) despite the progress of time, and against a tide of forgetting, childhood war trauma, which had been buried for decades, suddenly surfaced, entering the light of consciousness with an immediacy as if these traumas had occurred only yesterday' (Dr Peter Heint)

'All the time I was evacuated I used to tell myself that one day the war would be over and I could go back home. After the war we were living in a different part of London and I made my way back to where I used to live. The whole area had been completely obliterated during the first few days of the Blitz and I was quite unable to find the spot where my house once stood. This happened more than 70 years ago. I have lived in many other places. I now have a grown-up family of my own and I am a grandfather. I now have a lovely house, but somehow I'm still waiting to go home! (Jim Bartley)

(The Reverend Hugh Ellis)

Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. I am gentle and lowly of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (Matt 11:28-30)

We gather here today to remember before God all those who, in their childhood, have been affected by war

Let us pray.

God, our refuge and strength, bring near the day when wars shall cease and poverty and pain shall end, that earth may know the peace of heaven through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

On God alone my soul in stillness waits:

From him comes my salvation.

He alone is my rock and my salvation:

My stronghold, so that I shall never be shaken.

Wait on God alone in stillness, O my soul:

For in him is my hope.

In God is my strength and my glory:

God is my strong rock; in him is my refuge.

Put your trust in him always, my people:

Pour out your hearts before him, for God is our refuge.

Wait on God alone in stillness, O my soul.

(from Psalm 62)

A Minute's Silence

The Laying of Wreaths