

Reflection for November 6, 2022 - Our Remembering

Based on Micah 4: 1-5 and Luke 6:20-31

We do wonder, as Shirley Mae offered in our prayer of illumination, whether or not there will be a possibility one day of the kind of peace that is the Creator's will. Profits like Micah and Isaiah spoke of it in their time.

“...they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more;”

And it was of course the anchor of Jesus' ministry. ²⁷***“But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ³¹Do to others as you would have them do to you.”***

Those messages were spoken and scribed for reasons that were obvious. Nations seemed to be always at war with one another. Conquest was common. Pharaohs, Emperors, and Kings did what they felt like and took what they wanted, with savage force and incredible brutality. Resistance was swiftly nullified. It has been that way throughout recorded history.

And to our dismay things unfortunately have not changed much with the passage of time. In many ways one might even say that they have worsened, as we have found more ways to torture and kill each other than ever before.

We are all aware of the war underway today in the Ukraine, but military conflict is not limited to that region of the world. (Pic)¹ Additional territorial disputes exist in the Nagorno-Karabaka, the Kurdish-Turkish and Israel-Palestine conflicts. There are civil wars in Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Haiti, Libya, and South Sudan. There is political instability in many regions and terrorism continues to threaten the lives and property of the innocent. It is hard to keep track of areas throughout the world where human life is compromised on a daily basis.

One thing we do know as certainty, while we may not grasp the reasons for conflict, we can all agree it is unnecessary. It is always unnecessary. Its reprehensible. Its an insult to God the creator of all that is, and it is an affront to Jesus, who asks us to love one another without condition.

All this brings me to some questions I ponder often, and especially on a day like this, Peace Sabbath, the Sunday just before Remembrance Day. I question if anything I do makes a difference. I wonder if I am just wasting my breath, is anyone really listening that war is not the answer. I also wonder where God is in all of this.

During a trip to Scotland in 2005 we drove up Inverness way to Culloden. This historic site preserves the last battle on British Soil. (Pic) It also commemorates and end to the clan system in the Scottish Highlands.² Here on the 16th of April 1746 the forces of Prince Charles Edward Stuart, (or Bonnie Prince Charlie as he was better known) attempted to reclaim the throne for his family. He was met by a British army led by the

¹ [Mapped: Where are the World's Ongoing Conflicts Today. \(visualcapitalist.com\)](https://www.visualcapitalist.com/mapped-where-are-the-worlds-ongoing-conflicts-today/)

² [where is culloden battlefield - Search \(bing.com\)](https://www.bing.com/search?q=where+is+culloden+battlefield)

Duke of Cumberland, son of the Hanoverian King George II.³ In a bloody battle the Jacobite uprising under Prince Stuart was crushed in less than an hour.

What was amazing for me about Culloden was that I stood on the very spot where the MacLean Clan made their last stance. Small cairns have been placed in the fields where other clans took their positions. And this tribute was erected to some of them. (Pic).

It was eerie standing on what was once a Scottish Moor looking across the fields a few hundred meters to where the English positions were. I tried to imagine cannon fire coming my way and then changing soldiers, but of course I could not get much perspective. I only knew that I would have felt terrified. All the same I had a sense of melancholy at the lives lost there, my clan members among them. I was moved in my remembering.

Shirley Mae sharing – (Shares regarding her trip to France and her visits to the Dr. John McCrae Memorial and the Menin Gate Memorial).

Shirley Mae (and thank you again for sharing) and I had something in common during our experiences. We were both moved emotionally. Those past events in which many members of our human family died was not lost on us. Standing in the moment kind of brought the reality home. And that's a good thing.

It is doubtful that any of us here today (or for that matter any of our grand or great grand children) will ever see a world where armed conflict becomes a thing of the past. It is doubtful that justice and equality will prevail in our societies any time soon. Sometime perhaps, in a lifetime, swords and spears will be transformed into ploughshares and pruning hooks. In a lifetime perhaps we will learn how to treat each other with the kindness and love Jesus asks us to. Some day, but not today.

Today and this coming Friday, remembering is the key. Steeped in our remembering keeps the hope for peace alive. Our remembering saddens us, but it also stirs us up and makes us angry. Change happens when people are motivated with good intention. Remembering unnecessary loss from armed conflict will help us.

I mentioned earlier that I wondered if anything I did made a difference in the arena of world conflicts. I wondered if I was just wasting my breath preaching that war was not the answer. I wondered where God was in war.

Do I think I am making a difference. I pray that I am. I think I am, and I think you are when we share the stories of tragedy among us and outside this COF, expressing our grief and our frustration. Are we just wasting our breath. I don't see it that way. I see people who care, who abhor violence and cruelty speaking out. That has to have some impact. And where is God in times of armed conflict, or any conflict where there is loss of life and incredible grief.

That is perhaps the easiest question to answer. God is there providing comfort, an opportunity for healing and an assurance of never being abandoned. We are there too, when we remember.

³ [the battle of culloden 1746 scotland - Search \(bing.com\)](#)

Thanks for listening this morning, Amen