



St Mark's Church, Reigate

November 2025

Letter from the Vicar, Father Martin Colton

Dear Friends

It's getting darker and colder, with leaves blowing, mist rising, winter migratory birds arriving and the scent of fallen apples. The mood is one of elegy! November invites us to remember what has gone.

The month begins with All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, both of which we will keep on Sunday 2nd November. In the morning we will keep All Saints' Day where the saints and martyrs, known and unknown, who have died in faith and gone before us in glory are celebrated. In the evening we will bring to mind those we have loved and lost at our All Souls' Day Service, lighting candles and remembering them by name in our prayers. It is a peaceful but powerful memorial to each person individually named and remembered and acknowledges the people present together in their separate and united grief.

"Remember, remember the Fifth of November, gunpowder, treason and plot!" recalls an historic event, a threat to the established order foiled in 1605, commemorated with bonfires, fireworks, hot-dogs and toffee-apples! On Armistice Day, 11th November, we stop what we are doing at 11.00 am for two minutes' silence to honour the fallen of two world wars, and to remember loss of life on an unimaginable scale. On Remembrance Sunday, 9th November, at the War Memorial, as at all Memorials up and down the country, wreaths of poppies are laid, the bugle calls the Last Post, the words of Laurence Binyon 'For the fallen' are read as is the Kohima Epitaph:

*'When you go home, tell them of us, and say:
For your tomorrow we gave our today.'*

This act of Remembrance, far from decreasing with time, seems to grow in significance with each passing year. Why is this? I wonder if it is the sense that peace is precarious, we must not forget lest it should happen again. Or that other conflicts have happened since with further loss of life and the need to remember is ongoing, and the need for consolation and pastoral care of the more recently bereaved and injured. Or the poignant sense that, with some shining exceptions, few have firsthand memories now of the last world war and, on their behalf, we fulfil the promise, 'We will remember them.'

With every blessing