



Beginning of Lent - Reflection

A life changing question you can ask this Lent is, who and what is Jesus for you? When I was a child and first began to find out about Jesus two things stood out. One was the story of his death on the cross and the resurrection. Two extraordinary events at the end of his earthly life. The second was how he lived his public life in the lead up to those events. He was person who showed such compassion, love and practical care for those who were sick and in need. He healed those with long-term illnesses. He broke down barriers between people.

He made it possible for those who were outcast and living on the fringes of the mainstream society of the time to find safer homes and places of welcome.

Jesus had a few key ways to describe himself and his work. One of his most clear was when on a visit to the synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth he was given the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the scroll and read these verses (Luke 4.18, 21):

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

He then said, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing".

Jesus saw himself as one who would bring healing, hope and liberty. He saw himself as one who would reveal God's love and lead others to know God's love. He was clear that those who walked in the path of that love and loved others in the same compassionate and unconditional way were aligned with the ways and will of God.

As we look back from our culture and time it is hard to grasp how revolutionary and how life changing Jesus' teaching was. And it still is. In our day and age, in this divisive climate of partisan politics when so many people in our community are in such need we need a life-changing vision, we still need help to see clearly, to see the bigger picture, to see beyond our own worries and concerns. We still need that clear call to a life of compassion and service and it is this call that Jesus so powerfully embodies.

The work of Anglicare is one practical expression of Jesus teachings and love. It is the 'charitable arm' of the Anglican Church and on behalf of all its members it endeavours to fulfil Jesus' call to love others as he has loved us.

This year Anglicare will assist over 3600 people through its food program in Canberra alone. It has key food relief points across the region. They are North Canberra (St Johns Care and the Junction Youth Services), South Canberra (Gordon Community Centre), Wagga Wagga (Ashmont Centre), Emergency Relief in Orange, and Homelessness and Housing services in Goulburn and Moruya. The peak times of demand throughout the year include the beginning of winter and Christmas.

Written by Rev'd Rebecca Newland





Beginning of Lent - Prayer Points

This lent please pray for the mission and ministry of Anglicare.
Below are some prayer points that may help you in this act of service.

Thank God for our 50 emergency relief staff and volunteers across the region who assist families with support.

Thank God for the schools, organisations and churches who generously donate to provide food relief to families.

Pray that as families prepare for the colder winter months that they would have provision for both warm winter clothing and for school lunches and meals for their children.

Pray for families and individuals struggling with homelessness or housing stress, that they would overcome any feelings of anxiety or shame and reach out for the support they need.

