



Office of the Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church

Lent 2023

Dear Sisters, Brothers, and Siblings in the Lord,

I greet you in the name of our loving, liberating, and life-giving Savior, Jesus Christ, in this, the 101st year of the Good Friday Offering.

In February 1968, two months before his assassination, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave a sermon in Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia, in which he remarked that upon his death he wanted to be remembered neither for his fame nor accomplishments but for serving others. He ended that sermon by quoting from Alma Bazel Androzzo's much-loved song, "If I Can Help Somebody," which Dr. King first heard 20 years before:

"If I can help somebody as I pass along,
If I can cheer somebody with a word or a song.
If I can show somebody he's traveling wrong,
Then my living will not be in vain."

Later, at Dr. King's funeral, the legendary Mahalia Jackson, sang these words as part of her rendition: "If I can do my duty as a Christian ought, If I can bring back beauty to a world of rot, If I can spread love's message as the Master taught, Then my living shall not be in vain."

Every Good Friday, we remember the sacrifice of our Lord whose teaching and life is the basis of that song. By walking the way of the cross, Jesus of Nazareth showed us what a life of sacrificial love is all about and left behind footsteps that we are called to follow. The selfless way of the cross enables us to live authentic Christian lives.

This coming Good Friday, April 7, I invite you into that selfless way of living through your part in the Good Friday Offering. For 101 years, Episcopalians have lived out the song, "If I Can Help Somebody," by providing sight to people at the Ras Morbat Eye Clinic in Yemen, one of the poorest countries on earth; for a child to receive an education at Christ Anglican School in Nazareth; for a hospital in Nablus to welcome new births at a rate of 30 per month; for young deaf people to be cared for and taught life skills in Jordan. Your gifts to these places and many others "spreads love's message" and enables both you and those you help to discover that "our living shall not be in vain."

Information including bulletins and ways to give is available online at <http://iam.ec/goodfridayoffering>. Any questions about the Offering may be directed to Archdeacon Paul Feheley, Middle East partnership officer. He can be reached at (800) 334-7626 x6222 or pfeheley@episcopalchurch.org. I remain

Your brother in Christ,

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry
Presiding Bishop and Primate
The Episcopal Church