

## Reflection

### *Lighten the Load*

by Angela Richards

October brings many things. Summer has ended and I look forward to a new season. I start thinking about jumpers, gloves and scarfs. This year my thoughts are dwelling on the past few months.

Do I really need to go out and if I do? Have I got my mask (plus a spare just in case), hand sanitiser, disposable gloves and my wipes?

Most women will understand when I say I've tried for several years to 'lighten the load' and carry a smaller handbag. I start by putting the very basics in it. Just a very small purse, my phone, keys, a pen and a little paper yet I always need something I've taken out.

This year has been very bleak and disturbing. It has affected us all in some way and for many it has been a time for sorting out, not just the drawers and cupboards. It has been a time that has opened our eyes to the world and to things we never ever thought we would witness. We have seen death in a way we could never imagine. Whilst we sat at home in lockdown on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2020 wondering why Covid-19 was taking so many lives and how nursing homes had so many deaths, we witnessed something that I believe has had a disturbing effect around the world, the brutal public murder of a black man in America.

My hope is that one day we won't need to carry around prejudice, racism, discrimination, as well as all the other things which weigh us down. I hope we recognise in ourselves when we need to stand up and speak out.

It's time to 'lighten the load' not just for ourselves but also for others.

## **1 Peter 5**

*...all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for*

*'God opposes the proud,  
but gives grace to the humble.'*

*6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. 8 Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. 10 And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. 11 To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

## **Prayer**

O Lord God

You carry our burdens with us

Help us to lighten the load.

On the cross Jesus took it all on Him.

You carry our burdens with us

We feel the weight of the sin of racism

In history, in the present:

In us and around us

You carry our burdens with us

Help us to lighten the load.

We feel the weight of injustice and inequality bearing down on our lives:

You carry our burdens with us

Help us to lighten the load.

Awaken us to your deep song for love and justice

Awaken us to have the love and humility to lighten the load for our brothers and sisters

Help us to lighten the load

In Jesus' name.

Amen.