

The Dunster Benefice
Carhampton, Dunster, Timberscombe,
Withycombe with Rodhuish, Wootton Courtenay
Newsletter 19th February 2021



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**Video Reflection
from the Archdeacon
of Taunton.**

Archdeacon Simon Hill
reflects on this week's
reading from Mark.

Click [here](#) to view on
YouTube.

From the Cathedrals

Portsmouth Cathedral - Livestream,
5.30pm, Saturday 20th February. David
Price plays Alan Ridout's *Stations of
the Cross* with a reflection for each
movement by Canon Angela Tilby. For
more details on the Cathedral's website
and the link to their livestream page
click [here](#).

St Paul's Cathedral - *Rooted in Love*
Watch Sarah Mullally (Bishop of
London) and Paula Gooder (Chancellor
of St Paul's) in conversation online
about how we can draw closer to Christ
this Lent. For more details and to watch
on the Cathedral's website click [here](#).

Sunday 21st February (First of Lent)

Readings & Collect

Heavenly Father, your Son battled with the powers of darkness, and grew closer
to you in the desert: help us to use these days to grow in wisdom and prayer that
we may witness to your saving love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Common Worship Collect taken from Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England © The Archbishops' Council 2000

Genesis 9.8-17

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 'As for me, I am establishing my
covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature
that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with
you, as many as came out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you, that never
again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be
a flood to destroy the earth.' God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I make
between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future
generations: I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant
between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen
in the clouds, I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every
living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to
destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the
everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the
earth.' God said to Noah, 'This is the sign of the covenant that I have established
between me and all flesh that is on the earth.'

Mark 1.9-15

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the
Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn
apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven,
'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the
wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and
the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of
God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come
near; repent, and believe in the good news.'

***Most churches will be open for private prayer on a Sunday or some other day of
the week, please keep an eye on the notice boards.***

Rector's Note

We all like to be comfortable in our clothes. The medieval practice of wearing a
hairshirt has pretty much died out. Thomas More, Lord Chancellor, executed in the
time of Henry VIII, wore a hair shirt for most of his life. There was something of the
aspiring monk about him, although he was married twice and had children. He spent
a lot of time in the Charterhouse in London, later suppressed and most of the
brothers hanged for not supporting the king. I cannot think of much that would be
more intolerable than being perpetually itching and sore, by wearing an undershirt
made of goat hair. That of course, is rather the point. Needless to say, should you
wish to (please don't!) you can buy a hair shirt on the internet.

In the story of Jonah, the whole of the city of Nineveh wore sackcloth and ashes
when he told them that God would destroy them for their behaviour. This included all
the animals, surely a comic touch by the author of the story – Jonah is a sort of
tragi-comic tale. Poor things, wound up in sackcloth and covered in ash, but we are
now in the season of Lent, when traditionally we call to mind our wrongdoing and
repent. Jonah himself was given plenty of opportunity to do this, trapped in the belly
of the whale, surely an apposite image for misery.

The point about repentance is not atoning – Jesus already did that for us – but about
turning round - *conversos*, the real meaning of conversion. Facing the world anew,
a fresh start, everything before us again.

Caroline

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