



The Benefice of the Piddle Valley, Hilton & Ansty, Cheselbourne and Melcombe Horsey

Sunday 2nd February 2020
Candlemas / Presentation of Christ

Altar Colour - White

Readings: Mal 3: 1-5, Psalm 24, Heb 2: 14-end, Luke 2: 22-40

Collect: Almighty and ever-living God, clothed in majesty, whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple, in substance of our flesh: grant that we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts, by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Hebrews 2:14-18 (ESV) - The Founder of Salvation

Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

COMMENT: Because we (the children = mankind) have a mortal nature, the Saviour deigned to share our fragility go through the trails of life and the agony of death, and through that, destroy the devil who leads man into death (Genesis 3:19; Romans 5:12). Before Christ came, mankind was in bondage of the fear of death. By his death, our Lord made death the gateway to eternal life with God and all the redeemed. The writer informs us that our Lord came to redeem mankind and not angels. In verse 16, the word $\delta\eta\pi\omicron\upsilon$ 'depou' (surely) is only found here in the whole of the New Testament. It means our Lord definitely took human and not angelic nature. Our Lord needed to be like us "in every respect" except sin (Heb 4:15), that is. He should have the same human nature, be subject to the same trials and sufferings, etc. The expression, "in every respect" must not be understood to embrace anything incompatible with our Lord's divinity, grace, or mission.

Through his incarnation he was to occupy a position in the New Covenant similar to that of the High Priest of the Old Covenant; He was to be, therefore, “merciful” (i.e., full of sympathy and understanding for our needs and miseries) and “faithful” (i.e., trustworthy in the fulfilment of all His duties and functions) “in the service of God”, the most important of which was to “be a propitiation, etc.” (i.e., to offer an atoning sacrifice to God for sin), as the Jewish High Priest’s chief function was to offer an atoning sacrifice on the great Day of Atonement “for the sins of the people” (Leviticus 4:15 ff., 26:1 ff.). As the great Jewish sacrifice was a propitiation for the sins of the Jewish people, so the sacrifice which Christ offered was a propitiation for the sins of all mankind; the former was a type of the latter. Because the Saviour shared our nature, he is able to assist us who are tempted.

Luke 2:22-40 (ESV) - Jesus Presented at the Temple

And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, “Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.” And his father and his mother marvelled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.” And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. The Return to Nazareth. And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favour of God was upon him.

COMMENT: When the infant Jesus is brought to the temple no one really knows or understands that ‘the King of glory’, as described in the psalm, has come into the temple. Simeon and Anna have some understanding. They have prayerfully waited for ‘the Lord’s Messiah’ (Luke 2: 26). What actually happened at ‘the presentation of Jesus in the Temple’? The Mosaic Law does speak about ‘sanctification of the first born to God’s possession’ (Exodus 13:2, 12, 15; 34:19; Numbers 3:13) but this was no longer taken literally, the tribe of Levi having been set aside for the LO`RD’s permanent possession instead (Numbers 8:17 following). An alternative of paying five shekels to a priest existed, but there was no requirement that this was paid at the Temple in Jerusalem. Luke anchors this story in the Law (2:22-24,39) and it appears that Joseph and Mary were being devout in taking up a cue from the law. Thus we read about a presentation which fits the circumstances of Jesus’ conception and birth: an extraordinary beginning to his life and magnificent welcome via angels and shepherds. What devout parents in such a situation would not take their child to the Temple of the Lord? It is always worth pondering the faithfulness of Simeon and Anna. Who among us can wait so patiently on the Lord for his will to be done and his word to be fulfilled?

Short Preface: And now we give you thanks because, by appearing in the Temple, he comes near to us in judgement; the Word made flesh searches the hearts of all your people and brings to light the brightness of your splendour.

Post Communion: Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna, who lived to welcome the Messiah: may we, who have received these gifts beyond words, prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes to bring us to eternal life; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen**

Blessing: Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory and gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Benefice Prayer Requests:

Please pray for the sick, those in hospital, and those recovering from illness or surgery including: Pat Kenwrick, June Kellaway, Ann Lambert, Fay Lord, Richard Hanbury, Geoff Harris, Ruth Tutt, Roger Gray, Anna Webb, Bernard, Martin DeWavrin, Stephanie Dibble, Marion Traynor...
(Any additions to the prayer list, please email the Rector.



Requiescat in pace

Julie Ayres-Rice, Ansty – Funeral Wednesday 2pm on 5th February 2020 at All Saints Church, Hilton

Pam Coleman, Milton Abbas – Memorial Service 2.30pm on 6th February, Service St James' Church, Milton Abbas

Robert Lewis - Funeral 11.30am 9th February 2020, at St Andrew's Church, Melcombe Horsey followed by committal at Poole Crematorium at 4pm.



What's going on around the Benefice!



Confirmation: There has been some interest expressed regarding confirmation. Fr. Roger will be contacting Bishop Nicholas of Salisbury to arrange this to take place within the Benefice. Please email the Rector if you would be interested in becoming a confirmation candidate.

4th February Tuesday, 10-11.30am Tiddlers at Piddle Valley School

6th February Thursday, 9.00am Morning Prayer, coffee and a chat with the Rector at Hilton.

6th February Thursday, 9.30am Morning Prayer with Alan Neades at Piddlehinton.

8th February Saturday, 3-5pm Messy Church at Piddletrenthide

Next Sunday 9th February 2020

3rd Sunday before lent

Readings: Isa 58: 1-9a, Psalm 112, 1 Cor 2: 1-12, Matt 5: 13-20

8.30am Holy Communion at Hilton

9.30am Family Eucharist at Alton Pancras

11.00am Parish Communion at Melcombe Horsey

6.00pm Sung Evening Prayer at Piddlehinton (Lay Led)

Dates for your Diary

Stepping Stones Tuesday 11th & 25th February

Police Chaplaincy Visits 10.00am 5th & 19th February

Benefice service at Milton Abbey Sunday 29th March 10.30am

Benefice Meeting at Piddle Valley School Wednesday 20th May 6.30pm

Rector: Fr. Roger Butcher, The Vicarage, Church Lane, Piddletrenthide. DT2 7QY.

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