

### Reflection Wednesday Lent 1 – 2021

Jonah is quite a popular figure in Lent particularly concerning his call to repentance. Yet Jonah was reluctant to challenge the way of life of the Ninevites because in his eyes they were a pagan nation not worthy to be saved. However, the Ninevites heeded the call of Jonah and sought forgiveness for all their wrongdoing as a whole community. I wonder how we would react if a person from another faith came to us and called on us to repent? Would we heed his voice in such a radical way or just ignore him? This shows that the message is much more important than the status, belief or background of the messenger. There are people in the world with tarnished reputations who rightly challenge the way we live, but we call them hypocrites and ignore the value and importance of what they say. Lent is our time to discern the truth in the messages we receive. John the Baptist came out of the desert dressed like a tramp but stirred the hearts of many with his call to repentance. Jesus comes from among the people. He was personable and caring but the authorities refused to accept him. The call for a sign would be understood today as *Prove you are from God!* They were like fish swimming in the ocean asking the other fish to prove the ocean exists. Today's story also emphasises the importance and value of a community working together for the good of all. Yes, we make an individual journey of Lenten repentance, but we do this together and for the benefit of all. We are always stronger together when working with and for others. Ultimately, we all benefit. All the people of Nineveh were saved - including those who hadn't changed. We are all making greater efforts to live more simply, be less wasteful, recycle, use renewable energy but it will only bring the healing needed for our planet the more this is done not only as a nation but with the global league of nations. Nineveh is proof that it can be done.