

The Presentation of the Lord 2 February



About the Presentation of the Lord

The celebration of this feast originated in Jerusalem before the fifth century and was adopted in Rome during the seventh century.

The feast of the Presentation of the Lord takes place forty days after Jesus was born and it commemorates the prescribed Mosaic ritual following the birth of a child. The liturgy for this feast recalls the encounter of Jesus with Simeon and Anna in the temple.

Christ was born as a light to the nations. Although by now our Christmas decorations and lights have been packed away, this feast offers us the opportunity to allow the light of Christ to shine brightly in and through us in a world that is overcome by the darkness of sin.

In the liturgy today, candles are blessed as a reminder that Christ is our light and that we in turn are called to reflect this light to everyone we meet.

What can we learn from today's Solemnity?

Simeon longed to see the birth of the Messiah and the Lord granted him what he asked for. Each day we too should long to encounter Christ. We are not going to meet Him in the same way that Simeon did. However, by our attentive listening to the Scripture readings in the liturgy and our reverent and willing reception of the Eucharist we will encounter Christ. Christ is also found in **other people and places**, for we hear Jesus say in Saint Matthew's Gospel "I was hungry, and you fed me." Each time we give of ourselves to someone in need, we are giving to Jesus and precisely at that moment we have met him also.

At the end of the Gospel for today's liturgy we hear Simeon say to Mary:

'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.' Like all parents holding their newborn babies, Mary and Joseph must have wondered what would become of their child. No one ever knows what is going to become of their children, but we all have a part to play in nurturing them, teaching them, helping them grow and most importantly teaching and guiding them in the faith.

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Collect

Almighty ever-living God,
we humbly implore your majesty
that, just as your Only Begotten Son
was presented on this day in the Temple
in the substance of our flesh,
so, by your grace,
we may be presented to you with minds made pure.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

Luke 2:22-40

My eyes have seen your salvation

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses,
the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord,
– observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord:
Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord
– and also to offer in sacrifice,
in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord,
a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.
Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon.
He was an upright and devout man;
he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him.
It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit
that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord.
Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple
and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required,
he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

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'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace,
just as you promised;
because my eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared for all the nations to see,
a light to enlighten the pagans
and the glory of your people Israel.'

As the child's father and mother stood there
wondering at the things that were being said about him,
Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,
'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel,
destined to be a sign that is rejected –
and a sword will pierce your own soul too –
so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

There was a prophetess also,
Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.
She was well on in years.
Her days of girlhood over,
she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow.
She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple,
serving God night and day with fasting and prayer.
She came by just at that moment and began to praise God;
and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.
When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required,
they went back to Galilee,
to their own town of Nazareth.
Meanwhile the child grew to maturity,
and he was filled with wisdom;
and God's favour was with him.

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Antiphon

My eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples.

Hymn for the feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Jesus came down upon the earth
to be a light for all,
to take away our every sin,
help us rise when we fall.
A light for every nation,
the darkness He dispels.
May His light shine each day through us
as He within us dwells.

The holy Simeon rejoiced
when Christ the Child he saw
God had fulfilled his great promise,
His grace He did outpour.
Salvation had come that day,
God's glory was revealed.
The light of Christ would e'er shine bright,
no more was it concealed.
Jesus, Mary and Joseph came
to fulfil Jewish Law.

The prophet Simeon did tell
of all things he foresaw:
"Many will rise, many fall,
Christ will rejected be;
Mary, a sword will pierce your heart,
that is your destiny."

Jesus, the light of all the world,
now in us brightly shine.
May we take you out to the world,
be branches of your vine.
For our world is in darkness,
so we must be Your light,
and let the world know of your love,
which should be our delight.

Text: 86.86D, Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono
Tune: Forest Green

Other Music Suggestion
[Christ, be our Light](#)

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