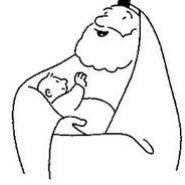




AMDG
THE PRESENTATION
OF THE LORD
2ND FEBRUARY 2020



**My eyes have seen
the light of salvation!**

OPENING PRAYER

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.

Forty days after Christmas, we observe the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple (the feast of Candlemas), when we celebrate Christ as the light of the world. In many places candles are blessed in church and carried in procession to welcome him. This day also marks the end of Christmastide, and the slow return of longer daylight hours.

Today's *First Reading* is a prophecy in which we can recognise the Messiah. His coming will be a challenge, but also good news for those who welcome him.

We sing the *Psalms* as we follow the Lord, our King of glory.

Christ has come to live among us as one of us. Although he is God's Son, he was tempted in every way that we are, and so is able to help us in our temptations (*Second Reading*).

The *Gospel* reminds us of the first time the Lord entered the Temple, with Mary and Joseph. There he meets Simeon, an old man who recognises Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah; together with Anna, a prophetess who tells everyone she meets about him.

As we read Simeon's warning to Mary that her son will be rejected, and that a sword will pierce her own soul, we might bring to mind and pray for all mothers, particularly those who witness and suffer the loss of their children, whether we know them personally or not.

SECOND READING HEBREWS 2: 14–18

Since all the children share the same blood and flesh, Jesus too shared equally in it, so that by his death he could take away all the power of the devil, who had power over death, and set free all those who had been held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. For it was not the angels that he took to himself; he took to himself descent from Abraham. It was essential that he should in this way become completely like his brothers so that he could be a compassionate and trustworthy high priest of God's religion, able to atone for human sins. That is, because he has himself been through temptation he is able to help others who are tempted.

What mood am I in today as I come to pray?

I pause for a few moments and reflect.

Maybe I've longed to spend time with the Lord ...

or maybe I pray from a sense of duty: 'I should, I ought to, I must ...'?

Without judging, I simply acknowledge the situation and if it helps, ask the Holy Spirit to be with me.

After taking a deep breath, I breathe normally and tell the Lord of my hopes for today. Maybe I am simply content to be still in his presence.

When I am ready, I slowly read the text, perhaps several times.

If there is a phrase which puzzles or challenges me, I stop and ask the Lord to help me.

Perhaps I reflect on Jesus being like me, of the same flesh and blood.

I ponder how his death frees me from the fear of death.

I tell the Lord how I feel about this.

Maybe I go no further than this today in my prayer.

However, I may find it helpful to go with Jesus and his mother Mary to speak to God the Father, and ask him to grant me the grace I need.

I may want to speak of my current temptations, trusting that I will be listened to and heard.

What do they say to me? In my imagination I listen to them ... and take part in the conversation.

When the time comes to take my leave, I give thanks for these moments spent with the Lord.

Glory be to the Father ...

GOSPEL LUKE 2: 22–40 (abridged)

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 turtle-doves 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: ‘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.’

I make myself comfortable in my place of prayer, recognizing that I am in the presence of a welcoming and loving God.

I ask the Holy Spirit to help me pray, to have an open mind and heart.

When I am ready, I read the text slowly and carefully, noticing where it speaks to me most strongly, where it touches my heart.

If it helps, in my mind’s eye, I might like to place myself in the scene.

I notice that Joseph and Mary attend the temple in accordance with the Law of the Lord. What is my own attitude towards rules and regulations?

Maybe there are times when I have felt challenged by them? I ponder...

I see Simeon’s faith and trust as he waits patiently and quietly, listening to the Spirit, full of hope that he will set eyes on the ‘Christ of the Lord’.

To whom do I myself listen about important things in my own life?

I sense Simeon’s delight and joy as he takes the child Jesus into his arms.

How would I feel, welcoming and holding Jesus in this way?

How do I respond when I realise my own prayers have been answered?

Maybe I can be a light to those who have not yet come to know Jesus?

As I slowly bring my prayer to a close, I talk to God about how I feel now, in my own words, just as one good friend speaks to another.

Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

Who is the King of glory? ...

The Lord, the mighty, the valiant.

Psalm

Jesus set free all those who had been held all their lives
by the fear of death.

Second Reading

Because he has himself been through temptation,
he is able to help others who are tempted.

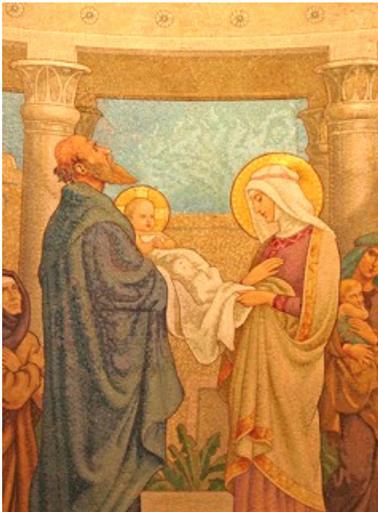
Second Reading

[You are] a light to enlighten the Gentiles and the glory of your
people Israel.

Gospel

This week's texts if you want to reflect further

Malachi 3: 1–4; Psalm 23 (24); Hebrews 2: 14–18; Luke 2: 22–40



‘Now, Master,
you can let your
servant go in peace ...
because my eyes have
seen the salvation
which you have
prepared for
all the nations to see.’



ST BEUNO'S OUTREACH
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JESUIT
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