

2 February – Presentation of the Lord

FEAST; white

Forty days ago we celebrated the joyful feast of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Today we recall the holy day on which he was presented in the temple, fulfilling the law of Moses and at the same time going to meet his faithful people. Led by the Spirit, Simeon and Anna came to the temple, recognised Christ as their Lord, and proclaimed him with joy. United by the Spirit, may we now go to the house of God to welcome Christ the Lord.

First Reading † Malachi 3:1-4

The Lord whom you seek will come to his temple.

A reading from the prophet Malachi

The Lord God says this:

‘Look, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me. And suddenly the Lord whom you seek will come to his Temple; yes, the angel of the covenant in whom you delight is on his way, says the Lord Sabaoth.

Who can endure the day of his coming?
Who will remain standing when he appears?

For he is like a refiner’s fire, like fullers’ alkali. He will take his seat as refiner and purifier; he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver so that they can make the offering to the Lord in righteousness.

The offering of Judah and Jerusalem will then be acceptable to the Lord as in former days, as in the former years.’

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial † Psalm 23:7-10

Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

Who is this king of glory?
The Lord, the mighty, the valiant;
the Lord, the valiant in war.

Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

Who is this king of glory?
He, the Lord of hosts,
he is the king of glory.

Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

Second Reading † Hebrews 2:14-18

He had to be made like us in all things.

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

Since, then, all the *children* share the same flesh and blood, he too likewise shared the same things, so that by his death he could set aside him who held the power of death, namely the devil, and set free all those who had been held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death. For he does not come to help angels, but rather he comes to help the children of Abraham.

It was essential that he should in this way be made completely like his brothers and sisters so that he could become a compassionate and trustworthy high priest as regards their relationship to God, to expiate the sins of the people. For, having been tested by the suffering he underwent himself, he can help those who are being tested.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation † Luke 2:32

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

This is the light of revelation to the nations,
and the glory of your people, Israel.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Gospel [Longer form] † Luke 2:22-40

My eyes have seen your saving power.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

And when the days were complete for them to be purified in keeping with the Law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – as it is written in the Law of the Lord: *Every first-born male shall be called holy to the Lord* – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is prescribed 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 a righteous and devout man, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, 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 seen the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came into the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, Simeon himself took him into his arms and blessed God and said:

Now, Master, you are letting your servant
go in peace according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation
which you have made ready in the presence of all nations;
a light for revelation to the gentiles
and for the glory of your people Israel.

As the child's father and mother were wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,

'Look, he is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is opposed – and a sword will pierce your soul too – so that the thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

There was a prophetess, too, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple, worshipping night and day with fasting and prayer. She came up just at that moment and began to praise God; and to speak about the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had completed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and God's favour was on him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Gospel [Shorter form] † Luke 2:22-32

My eyes have seen your saving power.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

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The Gospel of the Lord.