

The Presentation of Christ in the Temple 4 February 2018

Sentence My eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. *Luke 2.30-32*

Collect

Inspired by your Spirit, Lord
we gather in your temple to welcome your Son.
Enlighten our minds and lay bare our inmost thoughts.
Purify your people, and make us obedient to the demands of
your ways, so that we may mature in wisdom
and grow to full stature in your grace.
We ask this through our Jesus Christ our Lord, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God forever and ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of the prophet Malachi

*Malachi's name mean 'my messenger' and he speaks to a
dispirited people who have rebuilt the Temple in Jerusalem
(515BC) but have not seen the ideal age they expected. Malachi
stresses God's reliability in spite of the people's lack of fidelity to
the covenant.*

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me,
and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple.
The messenger of the covenant in who you delight – indeed, he
is coming, say the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of
his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For his like a
refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and
purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and
refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to
the Lords in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and
Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and
as in former years. *Malachi 3.1-4*

Reader Hear the word of the Lord

ALL Thanks be to God

Psalm 24 at 8am APBA page 244

This is a liturgical psalm to be sung on entering the Temple. Notice the connections between the creation of the world and the construction of God's sanctuary in Jerusalem, and the double entry into the sacred space by the worshippers and the Lord. Confronted by chaotic waters the city gates (personified) are despondent; now they are invited to 'lift their heads', a sign of joy.

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

Hebrews stresses the humanity of Jesus; he was not an angel but one of us. Jesus the high priest who has entered the heavenly sanctuary takes there the humanity we share. Jesus was tested by suffering and so is able to help the community receiving this letter and also we who hear it today.

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested. *Hebrews 2.14-18*

Reader May your word live in us

ALL and bear much fruit to your glory.

Gospel Acclamation

ALL Alleluia! Alleluia!

Jesus came as a light for revelation to the gentiles
and for glory to his people Israel.

ALL Alleluia!

Reader The Lord be with you

ALL And also with you

Reader A reading from the holy gospel according to
Luke

ALL Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

In Luke's birth story, Mary and Joseph come from Nazareth in Galilee and return there after the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. This event could plausibly have taken place on that journey home, forty days following Jesus' birth. Luke's purpose is to recognize the entry of Jesus into the Temple, to which he will often return but which his life, death and resurrection will make redundant.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.' Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, 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 before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul too.' There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to

praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him. *Luke 2.22-40*

Reader For the Gospel of the Lord
ALL Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Prayer for the Week

O Lord, you have taught us that all our doings without love are worth nothing: send your Holy Spirit, and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of love, the true bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whoever lives is counted dead before you; Grant this for your only Son Jesus Christ's sake. **Amen.**

Bible Readings next week

Last Sunday after Epiphany- Transfiguration.

2 Kings 2.1-12 Ps. 50.1-6 2 Corinthians 4.3-12 Mark 9.2-9

Pray for the Faithful Departed

We remember before God: Grace Martin, Robin Francis Martin Brown, Garry O'Dell Armstrong, Ruth Were, Harold Braund, Herbert Fowler, Marian Ransome, Audrey Henry, Peter Howard, Katina Elliott, Marjory Werner and Violet Newton *whose anniversaries occur this week.*

Commemorations of the Week

February 5 Martyrs of Japan, crucified at Nagasaki 1597.

Christianity in Japan was introduced by St. Francis Xavier of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits in 1549 and made rapid progress. Persecution arose from 1596 till 1640, when all foreigners were banned from Japan, a ban which lasted for two centuries till 1859.