

## Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas)

### Opening Prayer

Almighty and ever-living God, clothed in majesty, whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple, in substance of our flesh: grant that we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts, by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

**Amen.**

**Or**

God of light, your eternal Word came to share our flesh and blood and build us into a living temple for your praise and glory. Guide us by the Holy Spirit to recognise and welcome your Christ however he may present himself to us, that on the day of his coming in judgement, we may be found righteous in your sight, and our lives may be accepted as an offering pleasing to you. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### First Reading

*Malachi 3: 1-4*

Look, I am going to send my messenger to prepare a way before me. And the Lord you are seeking will suddenly enter his temple; and the angel of the covenant whom you are longing for, yes, he is coming, says Yahweh Sabaoth. Who will be able to resist the day of his coming? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he is like the refiners fire and the 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, and then they will make the offering to Yahweh as it should be made. The offering of Judah and Jerusalem will then be welcomed by Yahweh as in former days, as in the days of old.

*This is the word of the Lord.*

### Responsorial Psalm

*Psalm 23*

**R: Who is the king of glory? It is the Lord.**

O gates, lift up your heads;  
Grow higher, ancient doors.  
Let him enter, the king of glory! **R**

Who is the king of glory?  
The Lord, the mighty, the valiant,  
The Lord, the valiant in war. **R**

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

Who is he, the king of glory?  
He, the Lord of armies,  
He is the king of glory. **R**

### Second Reading

*Hebrews 2: 14-18*

Since all the children share the same blood and flesh, he 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.

*This is the word of the Lord.*

*While everyone's candles are lit in preparation for the proclamation of the Gospel, we sing:*

**The light of Christ has come into the world**

*(Lit O&N 657 repeated several times)*

### Gospel Acclamation

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

The light to enlighten the Gentiles and give glory to Israel, your people.

**Alleluia!**

### Gospel

*Luke 2: 22-40*

And when the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, they 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 he 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."

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 her years. Her days of girlhood over, 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 town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

*This is the Gospel of the Lord.*

### Prayer over the Gifts

Almighty God, accept the joyful praises of your Church, and grant that your Son may shine in us as the light that lightens every nation. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### Prayer after Communion

Loving God, make your grace perfect in us through this holy feast, and as you kept your promise to Simeon that he would not see death before he had welcomed the Messiah, grant that we may go forth to meet the Lord and receive the gift of eternal life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**