

## February 2, 2025—Presentation of Our Lord

www.GloriaDeiWinnipeg.org

### **Introduction**

The Presentation of Our Lord is referred to in some corners of the church as Candlemas because of an ancient tradition of blessing all the candles to be used in the church in the coming year at the mass celebrated on that day. It was a way of underscoring the truth of Simeon's confession that this baby Jesus was "a light for revelation to the Gentiles" and a light for glory to Israel. Let the light of every candle in church be a little epiphany of the love of God for all people in the person of God's son, Jesus, the light of the world.

### **Prayer of the Day**

Almighty and ever-living God, your only-begotten Son was presented this day in the temple. May we be presented to you with clean and pure hearts by the same Jesus Christ, our great high priest, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

### **First Reading: Malachi 3:1-4**

<sup>1</sup>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 whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>2</sup>But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup>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 LORD in righteousness. <sup>4</sup>Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

### **Psalm 84**

<sup>1</sup>How dear to me is your dwelling,  
O LORD of hosts!

<sup>2</sup>**My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the LORD;  
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.**

<sup>3</sup>Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young,  
by the side of your altars, O LORD of hosts, my king and my God.

<sup>4</sup>**Happy are they who dwell in your house!  
They will always be praising you.**

<sup>5</sup>Happy are the people whose strength is in you,  
whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.

**<sup>6</sup>Those who go through the balsam valley will find it a place of springs,  
for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.**

<sup>7</sup>They will climb from height to height,  
and the God of gods will be seen in Zion.

**<sup>8</sup>LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;  
give ear, O God of Jacob.**

<sup>9</sup>Behold our defender, O God;  
and look upon the face of your anointed.

**<sup>10</sup>For one day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.**

**I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of  
the wicked.**

<sup>11</sup>For the LORD God is both sun and shield, bestowing grace and glory;  
no good thing will the LORD withhold from those who walk with integrity.

**<sup>12</sup>O LORD of hosts,  
happy are they who put their trust in you!**

## **Second Reading: Hebrews 2:14-18**

<sup>14</sup>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, <sup>15</sup>and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. <sup>16</sup>For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

## **Gospel: Luke 2:22-40**

<sup>22</sup>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 <sup>23</sup>(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), <sup>24</sup>and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

<sup>25</sup>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. <sup>26</sup>It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <sup>27</sup>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, <sup>28</sup>Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

<sup>29</sup>"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,

according to your word;  
<sup>30</sup>for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
<sup>31</sup>which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
<sup>32</sup>a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.”

<sup>33</sup>And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. <sup>34</sup>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 <sup>35</sup>so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

<sup>36</sup>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 seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup>then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. <sup>38</sup>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.

<sup>39</sup>When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup>The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

## Prayers of Intercession

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

God of generations, you instilled in Anna and Simeon faith, dreams, and the welcome of a child. Bless elders who embody faith and hope; bless the newly baptized. Energize us to share faith from generation to generation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, in you the sparrow finds a home and we find lush valleys and living water. Bless the birds of the air, the animals of the valley, and renew our stewardship of this bountiful creation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of the nations, strengthen our resolve to care for all children and strive for peace among nations. Refine our nation where we have failed to root out racism and guide us in truth-telling and reconciliation. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of hope, many long to see your presence revealed amid challenging circumstances. We hold in prayer all longing for sustainable housing, secure employment, access to medical care, and health and wellness. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of the people, you are made known in caring ministries. Bless those who serve as communion servers, homebound visitors, baptismal sponsors, confirmation mentors, and as prayer support. Reveal yourself in the neighborly care we give and receive. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

God of life, we thank you for Jesus' life and for his death that has destroyed death. We remember the dearly departed, as they dwell with you in your holy courts now and forever. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.

**Amen.**

## Reflection

### Presentation of Our Lord

Forty days after the birth of Christ we mark the day Mary and Joseph presented him in the temple in accordance with Jewish law. There a prophetess named Anna began to speak of the redemption of Israel when she saw the young child. Simeon also greeted Mary and Joseph. He responded to the presence of the consolation of Israel in this child with the words of the Nunc dimittis. His song described Jesus as a "light for the nations."

Because of the link between Jesus as the light for the nations, and because an old reading for this festival contains a line from the prophet Zephaniah, "I will search Jerusalem with candles," the day is also known as Candlemas, a day when candles are blessed for the coming year.



Gloria Dei  
LUTHERAN CHURCH