

PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

YEAR A

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

O God,
you have shown
such love for us.
You sent
your only Son, Jesus,
to save us.
You have given us great joy.
You have given us light,
through Jesus Christ,
your Son.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

The focus of our readings is God's presence in the temple, the one to be adored. In the first reading, the prophet Malachi tells us that God will send a messenger to prepare for the one to come. The Lord of the covenant is coming to the temple and will call all people to change their lives. Christian tradition has seen in this prophecy the persons of John the Baptist and Jesus.

The Gospel recounts the day that Mary and Joseph present Jesus in the temple. There, in the temple, he is recognized by both Simeon and Anna as the fulfillment of God's promise. He is the Savior of the Israelites and the Gentiles as well. But the Gospel also forewarns that this Savior will suffer and will be a sign of contradiction among his own people.

*Jesus is the Light and Savior
of the world.*

FIRST READING: *Malachi 3:1-4*

This is a reading from the prophet Malachi.

Our God says:

"See, I am sending my messenger
to prepare the way for me.
The one you are waiting for is coming.
The Lord of the covenant
is coming to the temple
and will call everyone to change their lives
and do what is right.
Then the people will make offerings
that are pleasing to me,
just as they did long ago."

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: *Psalm 24*

RESPONSE:



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



GOSPEL: *Luke 2:22, 24-25, 27-36, 38*

This is a reading from the Gospel of Luke.

Mary and Joseph brought Jesus
to the temple in Jerusalem
to present him to God
and to make an offering of two turtledoves.
That same day,
a man named Simeon came to the temple.
He was a good and holy man
and was waiting for the Messiah to come.
When Simeon saw the child Jesus,
he took him in his arms and praised God.
He said,

“Now, God, you have kept your promise.
I have seen the Savior.
He is the Light of the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel.”

[Jesus’ mother and father were amazed
at what Simeon said about him.
Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary,
Jesus’ mother,

“This child will be a sign
for all the people of Israel.
Some people will accept him and be saved.
Others will reject him.
And in your heart
you will suffer because of this.”]

There was also a holy woman,
a prophetess named Anna,
who was in the temple.
When she saw the child,
she, too, began to praise God.
And she talked about him to everyone
who was waiting for the Messiah to come.

The Gospel of the Lord.

[] Reader may omit text that appears in brackets.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

Explain to the children that it was customary to take the first child (son) to the temple to be consecrated to God. Since this rite was specific to the first male child only, we will not want to compare it to Christian baptism. This was a Jewish ceremony which included a rite of purification and the offering of a sacrifice. In this case, the offering was two turtledoves, the offering of the poor.

Two points might be emphasized in today’s Gospel.

1. Simeon, the holy man, recognized Jesus as the Light and Savior of the world. *He is our Light and our Savior.* Help the children understand what this means in our everyday lives.

- How is Jesus our Light?
- How is Jesus our Savior?

Remind the children that we often use a candle as a symbol of Christ:

- Easter candle,
- a baptism candle,
- an altar candle,
- a sanctuary lamp.

2. Anna, the prophetess, “talked about him to everyone who was waiting for the Messiah.” Many people today are waiting for a sign of hope, for help, for light, for salvation. Can we talk to them about Jesus? *Can we, like Anna, tell others the Good News of Jesus?*