

Commentary on the Gospel for Fri, Feb 2nd 2024

Raise the Lord in our arms

The Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the temple is also the World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life, honouring and praying for the lives of all men and women who have heroically consecrated their lives to the Lord, for the love of God and in service to God's people. Every believer is consecrated to the Lord, and today, we recall our consecration to the Lord at the time of our baptism. Being consecrated, we are set apart to do the work of God, never alone but with our brothers and sisters.

The Feast of the Presentation is also a celebration of the long-awaited arrival of the Messiah in the temple and his meeting with his faithful people. Jesus' presentation in the temple is an act of community represented by Simeon and Anna.

The Lord comes to us, brought to us by Mary and Joseph, and we go towards him guided by the Holy Spirit. He is at the centre. He draws us to the Temple, to the Church, where we can meet him, welcome him, and embrace him.

The feast invites us to reflect on the meeting between the young and the old: Mary and Joseph, with their infant son, meet the old Simeon and Anna. It is important for the elderly to share their wisdom with the young, as it is for the youth to gather and carry forward this wealth of experience and wisdom, addressing the challenges of life.

Forty days have passed since Christmas, and it may be that the Star of Bethlehem that "we have seen in its rising" is disappearing in the sky. The Church brings us the opportunity to meet that Child again: she invites us to welcome him in our arms, as did Simeon and Anna, the poor of Israel, the people attentive to the voice of the Spirit.

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