

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 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 years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. 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 own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God’s favour was with him.

#### ■ The Gospel of the Lord.

*Shorter form, Lk 2: 22-32*

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# Breaking Open the Word



# THE SAVING WORD

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD / C

2 FEBRUARY 2025

## A LIGHT TO ALL

The Torah, the first part of the Old (First) Testament, legislates the consecration by an Israelite family of the first-born male child to God (Exodus 13:2,12). Mary and Joseph are faithful adherents to Jewish law and represent Luke’s intention to illustrate that what unfolds in the couple and their child is in continuity with God’s plan expressed in the First Testament.

The two beloved and holy characters that Jesus’ parents next meet in the temple, Simeon and Anna, further underscore this connection. Simeon is a prophet and bearer of God’s Spirit who desires the “comforting” of his people. Guided by the Spirit he comes to the Temple and takes Jesus into his arms. He blesses God and reaffirms the future ministry of Jesus, to bring God’s salvation and light to all, while also being a sign of contradiction and rejection.

A second wizened prophet, Anna, also appears and attests that the child will be the cause of Israel’s liberation. Our reading ends on a note about Jesus’ growth, maturity, wisdom and gracefulness. The two prophetic figures that occupy this story affirm Jesus’ nature and his future ministry. He is linked to Israel’s history. He, like the two who attest to him in the Temple, will also be a prophet to God’s people, bringing liberation for the oppressed and challenge those who oppress. Our invitation this Sunday is to draw close to this child, to allow him to comfort and free us, and accompany us in moments of contradiction and difficulty.

Fr Michael Trainor

## FIRST READING

Mal 3:1–4

**A reading from the prophet Malachi**

*The Lord whom you seek will come to his temple.*

The Lord God says this: 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 the Lord of hosts. Who will be able to resist the day of his coming? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he is like the refiner’s 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 the Lord as it should be made. The offering of Judah and Jerusalem will then be welcomed by the Lord as in former days, as in the years of old.

■ The word of the Lord.

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 23: 7-10. R. v. 8

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

1. O gates, lift up your heads; / grow higher, ancient doors. / Let him enter, the king of glory! **R.**
2. Who is the king of glory? / The Lord, the mighty, the valiant, / the Lord, the valiant in war. **R.**
3. O gates, lift high your heads; / grow higher, ancient doors. / Let him enter, the king of glory! **R.**
4. Who is he, the king of glory? / He, the Lord of armies, / he is the king of glory. **R.**

## SECOND READING

Heb 2:14–18

**A reading from the letter to the Hebrews**

*He had to be made like us in all things.*

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

■ The word of the Lord.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 2:32

**Alleluia, alleluia! / This is the light of revelation to the nations, / and the glory of your people, Israel. / Alleluia!**

## GOSPEL

Lk 2:22–40

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.**

*My eyes have seen your saving power.*

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus 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