**FOR THE WEEKEND OF FEB. 1-2, 2025**

The Presentation of the Lord

**Gospel Reading**

Lk 2:22-40

When the days were completed for their purification

according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem

to present him to the Lord,

just as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens

the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord,”

and to offer the sacrifice of “a pair of turtledoves or two young

pigeons,” in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon.

This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of

Israel, and the holy Spirit was upon him.

It had been revealed to him by the holy Spirit that he should not

see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord.

He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents

brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in

regard to him,

he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:

“Now, Master, you may let your servant go

in peace, according to your word,

for my eyes have seen your salvation,

which you prepared in sight of all the peoples,

a light for revelation to the Gentiles,

and glory for your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said

about him;

and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold,

this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and

to be a sign that will be contradicted

(and you yourself a sword will pierce) so that the thoughts of

many hearts may be revealed.”

There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of

the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived

seven years with her husband after her marriage,

and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left

the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer.

And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God

and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the

redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the

law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the

favor of God was upon him.

**Intercession**

May we, the Church, grow in strength and wisdom like the Christ child, through the efforts of the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal and similar initiatives.

**Copy for Bulletin Announcement**

Loving someone means you’ll experience both joy and sorrow. This is especially true if you are a parent. Profound love for a child means incredible happiness and deep distress. Mary has already experienced this – or at least caught a glimpse of it – in Jesus’ short life. His birth was heralded by angels. He was visited by three magi bearing precious gifts as an infant.

Now, 40 days later when Mary and Joseph, according to Judaic law, presented Jesus in the Temple, they hear their son exalted as the Messiah by two holy people. But the torment Mary will experience on the road to Calvary and at the foot of the cross is prophesied by Simeon: “You yourself a sword will pierce.”

Throughout Jesus’ childhood, Mary is reminded that His path will be a singular one, and she “kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.” (Luke 2:19). She and Joseph remain faithful to the God’s call to be the earthly parents to His son. And they share him with a world that needs his light.

May we all follow their example of love and faithfulness in our relationships with our family and friends, as well as our greater Church community through support of the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal.

**Copy for Pulpit Announcement**

Faithfulness abounds in today’s Gospel. First, we have Mary and Joseph. They adhere to the religious laws of their faith by circumcising Jesus and presenting their first born to the Lord (Exodus 13:15), and they carry out the purification of the mother 40 days after birth (Leviticus 12:1-8).

Then, there is Simeon, who is “righteous and devout” (Luke 2:25), and Anna, who “worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer” (Luke 2:37). Simeon and Anna symbolize hope and expectation. They are faithful, devout Jews who are waiting for the Messiah, “a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.” (Luke 2:32). Jesus fulfills their longing. At the time of their meeting, he is only a baby, but they see him through the eyes of faith, recognizing that he is the realization of all their hopes and expectations.

Jesus may not physically be among us like He was for Joseph and Mary, Simeon and Anna. But He is alive in our midst through our faith, in our words, and through our deeds. When we support the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal, we share His hope with those who need His light and love.

**Social Media Post/Content**

Photo: Light breaking through clouds

Header: “My eyes have seen your salvation” – Luke 2:30

Copy: Good things come to those who wait! With patience, Anna and Simeon trust that the Lord is coming. May we make His presence felt in our community today through support of the Bishop’s Stewardship Appeal.