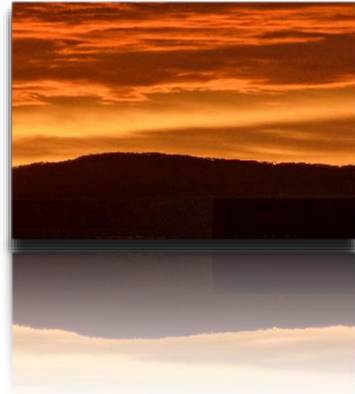


## Feast of the Presentation of the Lord –02 February 2022

### Acknowledgment of Land, Seas, Skies and Waterways

As we reflect upon the day where Mary and Joseph took Jesus to experience a family and cultural ritual, we remember and acknowledge the First Nations Peoples who have walked upon and cared for these lands, seas, and waterways for many thousands of years. Lore has been taught on these lands, seas, and waterways over millennia; and connection to Creator Spirit and Country has been handed down to young people over time. We pay our respect to the elders, past, present, and emerging who will continue to pass on these ancient beliefs and rituals on this land.



### Context of the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

The Presentation of the Lord Feast Day is held 40 days after Jesus was born. Prior to Vatican II this day marked the end of the Christmas Season, (it is now marked by the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord). At the beginning of the eighth century, Pope Sergius inaugurated a candlelight procession into the celebrations, and this evolved into the blessing and distributing of candles during the service. This continues in some parts of the world today giving the feast its popular name: Candlemas.

### Scripture From the Gospel Reading of the Day 2<sup>nd</sup> February

#### Jesus is presented in the Temple. [Luke 2:22 – 40]

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

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. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. 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, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word;  
for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.”



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

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, 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. 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.

### **The Return to Nazareth**

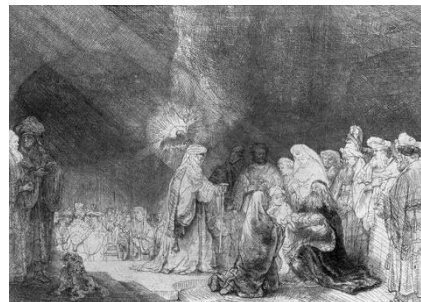
When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

### **Reflection by Bec Burns**

#### **Consultant Formation, Identity and Outreach Directorate, Cairns Diocese**

The Presentation of the Lord Feast, sometimes referred to as the 'Encounter' was first observed in the Eastern Church. When reflecting on the Scripture through the Lens of Encounter, there is much to be discovered. The first encounter is that between the Holy Family. This family, connected via a radical 'Yes,' step out into the world as one entity, perhaps for the first time. Together as husband and wife, following their love of God and respect of the custom, they take Jesus to the temple. This ritual itself is an encounter with the other. Many young people in modern times lack connection to groups and communities, and this can lead to searching for belonging in a myriad of ways. In the last two weeks, many teachers across the diocese had the privilege of listening to Fr. Richard Leonard, where he highlighted the importance for all people to connect to 'something bigger than ourselves' when discovering meaning and purpose. The ritual in the Gospel invites Jesus into his family's history and sense of belonging.

The other encounter that occurs on this day is with Simeon and Anna. Recently, while looking through old photos, I discovered some of our son's Baptism, held in Innisfail in 2006. At the time the church was out of action due to Cyclone Larry, and the Baptism was held at the Parish Centre. It was not grand or fancy, or as striking as the beautiful church, yet powerful emotions are connected to this day. The images I saw in these photos were of people offering blessings to my child and family. People that wanted to connect this child to hope and love in the world despite living in a time of great uncertainty (much like now) following that cyclone. Like Anna and Simeon, the people gathered felt the potential of the whole person in this little baby. Anna and Simeon felt the Spirit move within by the presence of this child and they embraced this moment and spoke about it openly with the Holy Family.



*Presentation in the Temple*. Fine Art. *Britannica ImageQuest*, Encyclopædia Britannica, 25 May 2016. [quest.eb.com/search/108\\_215360/1/108\\_215360/cite](https://www.britannica.com/search/108_215360/1/108_215360/cite). Accessed 24 Jan 2022.

As parents we are constantly encountering our children. Seeing them for not what they can do today, but rather seeing what they will be able to do tomorrow, next year, or throughout their life. We, like Mary and Joseph can connect children to their story, their family history, rituals, and traditions. By doing this we are inviting our young people to also see their whole self as being made up of many parts, with potential to contribute positively to their story.

### **Prayer**

Let us pray that, like Simeon and Anna, we too will be filled with the Holy Spirit,

so that we can recognize the goodness and holiness in all the people we meet and have the courage to help where needed.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with compassion and kindle in us the fire of your love.  
Amen.

- Prayer taken From Loyola Press activities Year 7 – 8 Presentation of the Lord <https://www.lofolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/presentation-of-the-lord-sunday-connection/> (accessed 27.1.22)

### Call to Action

Take a look as a family at [Loyola's Press background information and activities](#) based around the Presentation of the Lord.

As a family discuss your traditions and rituals that you children may have participated in as babies.

Talk about your own memories as children and what your family taught you about belonging.

