



# ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

*"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."*

**Our Vision:** *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

## THIS SUNDAY —February 5 & Beyond

### Presenting Ourselves to God



This Thursday (February 2nd) the Church celebrates the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord, also known as Candlemas.

Within the Season after Epiphany, which stresses the manifestation or revelation of our Lord to the world as the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One of God, Candlemass is a specially fitting feast to celebrate, since it brings out the baby Jesus being presented at the temple as the "light for the Gentiles and Glory to your people Israel" as Simeon proclaimed Him to be.

The presentation of the male infants forty days after their birth to God in the temple, together with the rite of purification for the mother, was the ritual custom of the time, so what Joseph and Mary did was just what was required of them by the Law.

They probably just expected to go about the required ritual, present the offerings, and then simply return to Nazareth.

But they were met by two characters that changed the expected course of events.

First, Simeon, a righteous and devout old man who had been promised by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before being granted the wonderful grace of meeting the Messiah personally. At that point he is granted this grace.

Here is what St. Luke the Evangelist tells us that Simeon told Mary, “Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against (and a sword will pierce through your own heart also), that thoughts out of many hearts will be revealed.”

What Simeon perceived in the child that he held in his arms was a revelation, not only of the fulfillment of the Messianic promise, but of how He would be a channel of the revelation of the true character of many who would come in contact with Him, both those who would follow His Way of Love, and those who would oppose Him.

So Simeon was predicting that Jesus would make possible that many would be authentically present to the moment of their encounter with Him, and would have to make the choice of embracing God’s Way of Love or rejecting it.

Simeon was truly present to the moment he was offered by God and embraced it with all his being. He also embraced the fact that his earthly years were almost over and did it with the joy of having been granted the tangible vision of God’s salvation for his people. His words are well known because through the centuries they have been put together in a canticle known as the *Nunc Dimittis*, which is the Latin for *Now you let depart*.

The other character Joseph and Mary encountered was the prophetess Anna, whom St. Luke refers to as “a widow who did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day.”

Anna gave thanks to God for the grace of seeing the Christ, and “spoke of him to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.”

Anna was present to God all the time, and God granted her the great grace of meeting God’s Savior personally. Then she continued to be present. She would now be present to the people, to all those who were willing to hear the wonderful news of their redemption that she had witnessed firsthand.

Some commentators have said that the Feast of the Presentation is also about Simeon and Anna being present to God and to His Christ.

Simeon's words to Mary also remind us that it is also about us being genuinely present, even if the presence pierces our souls like a sword in suffering, or if it brings out our painful contradictions and brokenness. Hiding from the confrontations that God and His Christ bring to our lives will do us no good.

It is so delusional to think that because we live in the era of globalization, we are more present than ever to reality. Global reality is accessible through the social media, but at the same time there are innumerable ways of manipulating it, and so many unreal and confusing stories available on the web that it is easy to be alienated from reality all the time.

Our modern society does not encourage one-to-one contacts anymore. People are made to believe that it is normal to live apart from everyone else that are not part of their close circle of family and friends, and that the rest of the interactions can be virtual.

So being genuinely present to our Creator, which inevitably implies being present to our neighbors, and to the rest of creation becomes more fiction than reality each passing day.

Being truly present means getting to know the others as they really are (not as they may appear on a Facebook page), their needs and plights, their struggles, their feelings, and how our presence with them can make a change for the better in their lives.

All through His ministry on this planet, this is what Jesus did and taught His followers to do. Will we heed His call?

Rev. Carlos Expósito

Readings for The Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord

Malachi 3:1-4   Hebrews 2:14-18   Psalm 24:7-10   Luke 2:22-40

## CALENDAR

Note: We continue worshipping in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10am. Tuesday Noon Mass and Friday Morning Prayer at 10:00am are held in All Saints' St. Mary Chapel.

**SUNDAY February 5, 2023 The Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord**

**10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church**

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

Recording of Mass available before noon at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

**Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children**

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

**Christian Formation** Meets next at Noon on Sunday, February 12 in the Rector's Office. Topic: Communicating with God--

**TUESDAY** Noon Mass in St. Mary Chapel

**THURSDAY** Spanish Class 1:00pm to 3:00pm in the Flower Room. Taught by Fr. Carlos

**FRIDAY** 10:00am Morning Prayer in St. Mary Chapel

**SUNDAY February 12, 2023 The Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany**

**10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church**

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

Recording of Mass available before noon at [www.allsaintschurch.org](http://www.allsaintschurch.org)

**Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children**

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## **OUR CORE VALUES:**

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally