



4th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Feast of The Presentation of the Lord)



Date: Sunday, February 2, 2025 | **Season:** Ordinary Time before Easter | **Year:** C

First Reading: Malachi 3:1-4

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 24:7-10 | **Response:** Psalm 24:8

Second Reading: Hebrews 2:14-18

Gospel Acclamation: Luke 2:32

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:22-40

Preached at: the Chapel of the Most Holy Name, Kolvenbach House in the Archdiocese of Lusaka, Zambia.

The flickering flames of candlelight illuminate the temple, shadows dancing across the ancient stones, as Simeon takes the child into his arms. His eyes, aged by waiting, now glisten with the light of fulfillment. “Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, for my eyes have seen your salvation.” In that moment, in that frail and precious child, he beholds the light of the world. A light not merely to comfort, but to reveal, to challenge, to redeem. A light that will pierce the darkness, even as it pierces the soul.

This feast is the Presentation of the Lord, but it is also a feast of encounter. In the temple that day, an old man and a prophetess, shaped by decades of longing and prayer, meet the Messiah in His smallest and most vulnerable form. They have spent their lives waiting for the promise of God, and now that promise is cradled in their hands. What faith this required—to see salvation not in the form of an army or a throne, but in the soft breath of an infant! What trust it took to recognize that redemption had come, not in might, but in meekness!

And here stands Mary, young yet full of wisdom, carrying within her both the joy of promise and the shadow of prophecy. Simeon’s words cut through the wonder of the moment: “This child is destined for the fall and rise of many... and you yourself a sword shall pierce.” Even now, at the very beginning of Christ’s earthly journey, the Cross is foreshadowed. The light He brings will not be a warm and comfortable glow—it will be a refining fire, burning away complacency, exposing the thoughts of many hearts.

This is why today is also the World Day for Consecrated Life. For like Mary, like Simeon, like Anna, those who dedicate themselves to God's service do so in the light of both promise and sacrifice. The consecrated life is not merely about personal holiness—it is about bearing the light of Christ into the world, about standing as a living sign of hope, even when that hope is met with resistance. To be a consecrated religious, a priest, a missionary, a contemplative, is to stand in the temple of the world and proclaim, “My eyes have seen your salvation,” even when the world does not yet recognize it.

And this call is not only for those in religious vows. Each of us, by virtue of our baptism, is consecrated to God. Each of us is called to carry the light, to present Christ anew in our homes, our workplaces, our communities. The question is not whether we are called—the question is whether we recognize the call when it comes. Simeon and Anna spent their lives in expectation, in prayer, in watchfulness. And so, when the moment arrived, they were ready. Do we live with such attentiveness? Do we seek Christ daily, so that when He appears—perhaps in an unexpected form, in the poor, in the suffering, in the inconvenient—we recognize Him and rejoice?

This world is not an easy place to bear the light of Christ. It is tempting to let the flame flicker, to shield it from the winds of opposition. But we are not called to be passive keepers of the light—we are called to go out, to shine, to let the fire of faith be seen and known. St. John Paul II once urged the Church, “Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors for Christ!” This is our mission. Not to cling to comfort, but to embrace the radical call of the Gospel. Not to shrink in fear, but to stand in faith.

So today, we must ask ourselves:

- Do I recognize the presence of Christ in my daily life, even in the unexpected and the ordinary?
- How am I called to carry the light of Christ into my community, especially among those who live in darkness and doubt?
- Am I willing to let Christ's light not only illuminate my path but also refine my heart, even when it is uncomfortable?

Like Simeon, like Anna, like Mary, we are called to bear the light, to witness to salvation, to say with courage and conviction: “My eyes have seen the glory of the Lord.” May we live in such a way that others, looking upon us, may see that light, and come to believe.

Source: <https://sj.mcharlesworth.fr/homilies/2025-02feb-02-yc-ot-04/>

This homily is shared for personal and pastoral use. Please attribute the author and do not alter the meaning when quoting. If you wish this homily to be translated - there is an option on the website which will allow you to translate it into the language of your choice.

Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) license.

The author does not speak for the Society of Jesus or for the Catholic Church.



Receive Fr Matthew Charlesworth's Homilies on
WhatsApp



Receive Fr Matthew Charlesworth's Homilies on
Telegram



Receive Fr Matthew Charlesworth's Homilies on
Signal



Scan for Website



Scan for Onion Mirror

In preparing this homily, I consulted various resources to deepen my understanding of today's readings, including using Magisterium AI for assistance. The final content remains the responsibility of the author.