



Welcome to St Alban's Candlemas, or The Presentation

OPENING HYMN ©Bernadette Farrell

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Christ, be our light...

3. Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.
Christ, be our light...

4. Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone.
Christ, be our light...

5. Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.
Christ, be our light...

† In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Dear brothers and sisters, forty days ago we celebrated the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now we recall the day on which he was presented in the Temple, when he was offered to the Father and shown to his people.

As a sign of his coming among us, his mother was purified, as we now come to him for cleansing. In their old age Simeon and Anna recognized him as their Lord, as we today sing of his glory. In this Eucharist, we celebrate both the joy of his coming and his searching judgement, looking back to the day of his birth and forward to the coming days of his passion.

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Hear the words of our Saviour Jesus Christ: 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me shall never walk in darkness but shall have the light of life.' Let us therefore bring our sins into his light and confess them in penitence and faith.

We say together:

**Father eternal, giver of light and grace,
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,
in what we have thought, in what we have said and done,
through ignorance, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault.**

**We have wounded your love, and marred your image in us.
We are sorry and ashamed, and repent of all our sins.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us,
forgive us all that is past; and lead us out from darkness
to walk as children of light.
Amen.**

ABSOLUTION

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent,
have mercy upon you, † pardon and deliver you
from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness
and keep you in life eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

GLORIA

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

THE COLLECT

Almighty and ever-living God,
clothed in majesty,
whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple,
in substance of our flesh:
grant that we may be presented to you
with pure and clean hearts,
by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING Malachi 3.1-5

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; ³ he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

⁵ Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

This is the word of the Lord: **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL
Luke 2.22-40

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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 ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), ²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

²⁵ 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. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ 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, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹ 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.'

³³ And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ 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

³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—
and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

³⁶ 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 for seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ 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.

³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

THE SERMON

THE NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us worship the Saviour with joy and make our prayer to our heavenly Father.
RESPONSE: Lord, in your mercy...**hear our prayer.**

At the end of the prayers we say together:

**Merciful Father, accept these prayers, for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

THE PEACE

In the tender mercy of our God, the dayspring from on high has broken upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you:

And also with you.

THE PREPARATION OF THE TABLE

Father, in Christ there has sprung up a light for the righteous;
accept the gifts we bring before you and grant that Christ may shine in us to the praise and
glory of your name. **Amen.**

THE EUCHARIST

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right and good,
always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise
through Jesus Christ, who is one with you from all eternity.
For on this day he appeared in the Temple
in substance of our flesh
to come near to us in judgement.
He searches the hearts of all your people
and brings to light the image of your splendour.
Your servant Simeon acclaimed him as
the light to lighten the nations
while Anna spoke of him to all who looked for your redemption.
Destined for the falling and rising of many,
he was lifted high upon the cross
and a sword of sorrow pierced his mother's heart
when by his sacrifice he made our peace with you.
And now we rejoice and glorify your name that we,
too, have seen your salvation and join with
angels and archangels
in their unending hymn of praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise and bless you, loving Father, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; and as we obey his command, send your Holy Spirit, that broken bread and wine outpoured may be for us the body and blood of your dear Son.

On the night before he died he had supper with his friends and, taking bread, he praised you.

He broke the bread, gave it to them and said:
Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
Do this in remembrance of me.

When supper was ended he took the cup of wine.

Again he praised you, gave it to them and said:

Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did, in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross.

Bringing before you the bread of life and cup of salvation,
we proclaim his death and resurrection until he comes in glory.

Great is the mystery of faith

Christ has died: Christ is risen: Christ will come again.

Lord of all life, help us to work together for that day
when your kingdom comes and justice and mercy will be seen in all the earth.

Look with favour on your people,
gather us in your loving arms and bring us with the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Alban, St Simeon and St Anna and all the saints to feast at your table in heaven.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

As our Saviour taught us so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name;
Your kingdom come, your will be done;
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen**

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ

**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace**

God's holy gifts for God's holy people.

Jesus Christ is holy, Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Church of which we are members is not defined by the walls of a building but by the Body of Christ of which we are members.

In making our communion spiritually, we are joining with Christians everywhere to be nourished by the one who tells us, 'I am the Bread of Life'.

An Act of Spiritual Communion

**My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar.
I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul
so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and for ever. Amen.**

We light our candles and hold them up to be blessed.

Let us pray...

Lord God, the springing source of everlasting light,
pour into the hearts of your faithful people the brilliance of your eternal splendour,
that we, who by these kindling flames
light up this temple to your glory,
may have the darkness of our souls dispelled,
and so be counted worthy to stand before you
in that eternal city where you live and reign,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

We say together the Nunc Dimittis...

**Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace:
according to thy word.**

**For mine eyes have seen thy salvation;
Which thou hast prepared
before the face of all people;**

**To be a light to lighten the Gentiles
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

THE BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

May the Father, from whom every family in earth and heaven receives its name,
strengthen you with his Spirit in your inner being,
so that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith;
and the blessing...

CLOSING HYMN *Graham Kendrick ©1987 Kingsway's Thankyou Music*

**1. Lord, the light of Your love is shining
in the midst of the darkness, shining;
Jesus, Light of the World, shine upon us,
set us free by the truth you now bring us,
shine on me, shine on me.**

*Shine, Jesus, shine,
fill this land with the Father's glory;
blaze, Spirit, blaze,
set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow,
flood the nations with grace and mercy;
send forth Your word, Lord,
and let there be light.*

**2. Lord, I come to Your awesome presence,
from the shadows into Your radiance;
by the blood I may enter your brightness,
search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me, shine on me.**

Shine, Jesus, shine ...

**3. As we gaze on Your kingly brightness
so our faces display Your likeness,
ever changing from glory to glory,
mirrored here may our lives tell Your story.
Shine on me, shine on me.**

Shine, Jesus, shine ...

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