

FIRST FRIDAY HOLY HALF HOUR for 2nd February, 2018

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

(Silence – 2 mins)

HYMN: Joyful Celebration 436 - We seek thee Lord Jesus or any suitable hymn

LEADER: On this first Friday of the month, we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of our Lord which typically occurred on the fortieth day after the birth of Christ. It marks the purification of the Virgin Mary and the presentation of Jesus in the temple.

Jesus' presentation signifies God's entrance to His temple. "God made man" entered His temple, presenting Himself to those who were really searching for Him. The Child is revealed as the Messiah through the canticle and words of Simeon and the testimony of Anna the prophetess.

PRAYER: Lord, we implore your majesty just as on that day when you were presented in the temple. The entire act with the humble obedience of Mary and Joseph to the tradition of the time as well as the beautiful silence of Mary as she conceals in her hearts the words of Simeon fills us with the spirit of surrender. Grant us the purity of heart to understand the mission of your birth and to acknowledge you as the light of all nations.

SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 2:22-40 (To be proclaimed from the Bible) (Silence - 5 mins)

REFLECTION:

The Presentation of the Lord concludes the nativity and with the offerings of Mary and Joseph and the prophecy of Simeon, the events now set our gaze towards Easter.

Let us now contemplate on the scene in the temple. The presence of the Virgin Mary and Joseph and an humble offering of turtle doves with the child to be presented to God. What better offering could replace this child? They give to the Father what belongs to the Father. Simeon and Anna suddenly upbeat with their gaze at this Holy family. In the hustle and bustle of the temple, comes the moment of divine revelation.

The child Jesus comes to the temple not just bound by the legalities of the Mosaic law but to complete the process of a long wait. The greetings of Simeon and Anna embody the Father's longing for Humanity. We witness the subtlety of humanity encountering divinity.

The long wait of Simeon and Anna is over. Seeing the child, they are set free in their hearts and are ready to depart in peace while experiencing their salvation.

Like Simeon and Anna do we hold that longing in our hearts to experience Christ? **(Silence)**

For Simeon and Anna, the meeting place to express the fullness of a longing to see the Promised Light was the temple. In our case, where do we find this fullness of Christ within us manifesting itself? **(Silence)**

INTERCESSIONS

Leader: Christ shines as a light to all nations – His glory reaches all the ends of the earth. Through our Redeemer, we bring forth our petitions.

Res: Lord, hear our prayer

1. That the Church led by Pope Francis, all religious and clergy may lead the people to fix their gaze at experiencing Christ in their daily encounters. For this we pray, ...
2. That like the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph, we may be ever faithful to the teachings of the Church and emerge as the true light of Christ wherever we go. For this we pray...R/-
3. That we may be the light that dispels the darkness in the lives of people and give them new hope and strength. For this we pray...R/-
4. That with a humble and generous heart, we may share God's touch of comfort with the sick, lonely and elderly who long for friendship rooted in Christ. For this we pray...R/-

Leader: Father, we thank you giving us the light of Christ at our Baptism. Keep us always faithful to your commandments and help us in our mission to spread your message among all people. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, Amen.

CONCLUDING PRAYER:

Omnipotent and Eternal God, look on your faithful who have united on this feast of the Presentation in the Temple of your only Son-made-man, and grant that we also may be presented to you fully renewed in spirit. We pledge to serve the obedient, poor and chaste child who shines in His church and illuminates the whole world. Enable us to live soberly with the joy of giving. Keep our bodies chaste and our hearts pure, to live with undivided love for your glory and the salvation of mankind. We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Redeemer who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen

BENEDICTION:

FINAL HYMN: Joyful Celebration 232 – Just to fix our eyes on Jesus or any suitable hymn.

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