

Eucharist for the Presentation of Christ in the Temple

31st January 2021

OPENING HYMN: In a world where people walk in darkness
sung by St Martin's Voices

- 1 In a world where people walk in darkness,
let us turn our faces to the light,
to the light of God revealed in Jesus,
to the daystar scattering our night.
*For the light is stronger than the darkness
and the day will overcome the night,
though the shadows linger all around us,
let us turn our faces to the light.*

- 2 In a world where suffering of the helpless
casts a shadow all along the way,
let us bear the cross of Christ with gladness
and proclaim the dawning of the day.
Chorus

- 3 Let us light a candle in the darkness,
in the face of death a sign of life;
as a sign of hope where all seemed hopeless,
as a sign of peace in place of strife.
Chorus

Robert A Willis (born 1947) © Very Revd Robert A Willis

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.

INTRODUCTION

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

The people are invited to reflect on their sins. We keep a few moments of silence to remember before God our faults and the things we have done that are wrong. God promises us forgiveness, healing and a fresh start when we confess our sins in faith and penitence.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour
in thought and word and deed,
through negligence, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry
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 grant that we may serve you in newness of life
to the glory of your name.
Amen.**

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.

THE GLORIA is said

**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.**

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.

NEW TESTAMENT READING - Hebrews 2:14-end

14 Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, 15and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. 16For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham. 17Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. 18Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

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

GOSPEL READING Luke 2:22-40

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

Glorify you, O Lord.

22 When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Mary and Joseph brought Jesus 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'), 24and 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. 26It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. 27Guided 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, 28Simeon 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. 34Then 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 35so 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, 37then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and

day. 38At 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. 40The 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.

SERMON

APOSTLES CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Response:

Lord in your mercy

Hear our prayer

At the end:

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

Amen

THE PEACE

The priest introduces the peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you

and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

HYMN: Dear Father God

Dear Father God, we gather here
In this great house of prayer.
We come just as we are to you
as one who knows us through and through,
and keeps us in your care,
in love beyond compare.

Dear Father God, we praise the name
of Jesus Christ your Son,
The light for all the nations shines,
we see how your salvation binds
all people into one,
and brings your children home.

Dear Father God, we sing your praise
for promises come true.
As young and old our voices raise
and joyfully proclaim, "God's ways
are heaven breaking through
to make the earth anew.

We praise you, Father, for you own
our future and our past.
Your promised kingdom soon shall come,
and then, when earthly life is done
your love will hold us fast,
in heaven's peace at last.

So Father God, may each of us
go out into this night
to share the joy you give to us,
to praise, to sing, to teach, to bless
all people with your light,
and make earth's darkness bright.

Words: Rev'd Ally Barrett Tune: Repton

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord is here.
His Spirit is with us.

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.

The priest praises God for his mighty acts and we respond:

**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.**

The priest recalls the Last Supper.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died:

Christ is risen:

Christ will come again.

The Prayer continues.

At the end we respond:

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 forever.

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 sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God,
you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.**

Jesus is the lamb of God
Who takes away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to his supper.
**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
But only say the word, and I shall be healed.**

GIVING OF COMMUNION

You are invited to use the prayer for Spiritual Communion below asking Jesus to be with you now.

Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me,
for all the pains and insults you have borne for me.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,
I ask you to come spiritually into my heart.
O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly,
love you more dearly,
and follow you more nearly, day by day.
Amen.

The anthem 'Christ is the Light' by Rizza is sung and the hymn 'Faithful Vigil Ended'.

Faithful vigil ended sung by St Martin's Voices

- 1 Faithful vigil ended,
watching, waiting cease;
Master, grant thy servant
his discharge in peace.
- 2 All thy Spirit promised,
all the Father willed,
now these eyes behold it
perfectly fulfilled.
- 3 This thy great deliverance
sets thy people free;
Christ their light uplifted
all the nations see.
- 4 Christ, thy people's glory!

watching, doubting cease:
grant to us thy servants
our discharge in peace.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (born 1926) from Luke 2 vs 29-32 © administered by Oxford University Press in Europe (including UK and Ireland) and Africa, and by Hope Publishing Company in all other territories (including USA)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna,
who lived to welcome the Messiah:
may we, who have received these gifts beyond words,
prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes
to bring us to eternal life;
for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Amen.

Candles are lit. You are invited to light a candle at home.

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, and our homes, 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.

Amen.

Father, we bring to an end our celebration of the Saviour's birth.
Help us, in whom he has been born, to live his life that has no end.

We have greeted the light of the world.
Help us, who bear these candles, never to forsake the light of Christ.

We turn from Christ's birth to his passion.
Help us, for whom Lent is near, to enter deeply into the Easter mystery.

We bless one another in your name.
Help us to shine with your light in the world.

THE BLESSING

A blessing is given.

Go in the light and peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

The ministers depart. An organ voluntary is played.

Spiritual Communion.

The term 'Spiritual Communion' has been used historically to describe the means of grace by which a person, prevented for some serious reason from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, nonetheless shares in the communion of Jesus Christ. The form of prayer offers Christians an opportunity to give thanks for their communion with him, particularly at times when they would ordinarily be present at the Eucharist.

The Book of Common Prayer instructs us that if we offer ourselves in penitence and faith, giving thanks for the redemption won by Christ crucified, we may truly 'eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ', although we cannot receive the sacrament physically in ourselves. Making a Spiritual Communion is particularly fitting for those who cannot receive the sacrament at the great feasts of the Church, and it fulfils the duty of receiving Holy Communion 'regularly, and especially at the festivals of Christmas, Easter and Whitsun or Pentecost' (Canon B 15).

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'.