

CANDLEMAS



INTRODUCTION

Dear friends, 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 service, 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.



OPENING RESPONSES

God in Christ has revealed his glory.
Come let us worship.

From the rising of the sun to its setting
The Lord's name is greatly to be praised.

Give him praise, you servants of the Lord.
O praise the name of the Lord!



KING OF GLORY, KING OF PEACE

King of glory, King of peace,
I will love Thee;
and that love may never cease,
I will move Thee.
Thou hast granted my request,
Thou hast heard me;
Thou didst note my working breast,
Thou hast spared me.

Sev'n whole days, not one in sev'n,
I will praise Thee;
in my heart, though not in heav'n,
I can raise Thee.
Small it is, in this poor sort
to enroll Thee:
e'en eternity's too short
to extol Thee.

Wherefore with my utmost art
I will sing Thee,
and the cream of all my heart
I will bring Thee.
Though my sins against me cried,
Thou didst clear me;
and alone, when they replied,
Thou didst hear me.



CONFESSION

Our Lord Jesus Christ said:
The first commandment is this:
'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord.
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
with all your soul, with all your mind,
and with all your strength.'

The second is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.'
There is no other commandment greater than these.
On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.
Amen. Lord, have mercy.

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 have not held out the word of life
in a dark and twisted world:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

We have failed to share our bread with the hungry:

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

We have closed our hearts to the love of God:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Almighty God,
who in Jesus Christ has given us
a kingdom that cannot be destroyed,
forgive us our sins,
open our eyes to God's truth,
strengthen us to do God's will
and give us the joy of his kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



MY LIGHTHOUSE

In my wrestling and in my doubts
 In my failures You won't walk out
 Your great love will lead me through
 You are the peace in my troubled sea
 You are the peace in my troubled sea

In the silence, You won't let go
 In the questions, Your truth will hold
 Your great love will lead me through
 You are the peace in my troubled sea
 You are the peace in my troubled sea

My lighthouse, my lighthouse
 Shining in the darkness
 I will follow You
 My lighthouse, my lighthouse
 I will trust the promise
 You will carry me safe to shore
 Safe to shore.

I won't fear what tomorrow brings
 With each morning I'll rise and sing
 My God's love will lead me through
 You are the peace in my troubled sea
 You are the peace in my troubled sea

My lighthouse, my lighthouse
 Shining in the darkness
 I will follow You
 My lighthouse, my lighthouse
 I will trust the promise
 You will carry me safe to shore
 Safe to shore.

Fire before us. You're the brightest
 You will lead us through the storms



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



BIBLE READING

Luke 2:22-40

When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons”.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
 you now dismiss your servant in peace.
 For my eyes have seen your salvation,
 which you have prepared in the sight of all people,
 a light for revelation to the Gentiles
 and for glory to your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



REFLECTION



O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES

O for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace!

My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread thro' all the earth abroad
the honors of your name.

Jesus! the name that charms our
fears,
that bids our sorrows cease,
'tis music in the sinner's ears,
'tis life and health and peace.

He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
he sets the prisoner free;
his blood can make the foulest clean;
his blood availed for me.

To God all glory, praise, and love
be now and ever given
by saints below and saints above,
the Church in earth and heaven.



THE 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.**

 **A TIME OF PRAYER**

In the power of the Spirit, and in union with Christ, let us pray to the Father:

God of our salvation,
hope of all the ends of the earth,
we pray:
Your kingdom come.

That the world may know Jesus Christ
as the Prince of Peace,
we pray:
Your kingdom come.

That all who are estranged and without hope
may be brought near in the blood of Christ,
we pray:
Your kingdom come.

That the Church may be one in serving
and proclaiming the gospel,
we pray:
Your kingdom come.

That we may be bold to speak the word of God
while you stretch out your hand to save,
we pray:
Your kingdom come.

That the Church may be generous in giving,
faithful in serving, bold in proclaiming,
we pray:

Your kingdom come.

That the Church may welcome and support
all whom God calls to faith,
we pray:

Your kingdom come.

That all who serve the gospel may be kept in safety
while your word accomplishes its purpose,
we pray:

Your kingdom come.

That all who suffer for the gospel
may know the comfort and glory of Christ,
we pray:

Your kingdom come.

That the day may come when every knee shall bow
and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
we pray:

Your kingdom come.

Almighty God,
by your Holy Spirit you have made us one
with your saints in heaven and on earth:
grant that in our earthly pilgrimage
we may ever be supported by this fellowship of love and prayer,
and know ourselves surrounded by their witness
to your power and mercy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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 for ever.
Amen.**



LONGING FOR LIGHT

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.*

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.

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

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

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



CANDLEMAS 'PROCESSION'

Invite everyone to light a candle, as clergy move to The Crib

Blessed are you, Lord our God,
King of the universe.

Blessed be God for ever.

Your light shines on us
and all peoples shall see your glory.

Blessed be God for ever.

You gave us Jesus to be the light of the world;
he makes our darkness to be light.

Blessed be God for ever.

Through the Holy Spirit your love burns within us,
bearing witness to your truth.

Blessed be God for ever.

As we bear your light,
may our lips never cease to sing your praise.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God for ever.

 THE CONCLUSION

Father, we have sung your praise with shepherds and angels:
may Christ be born in our hearts today.

Praise to Christ our light.

We have shared in the joy of Simeon and Anna;
help us, like them, to trust your word.

Praise to Christ our light.

We stand near the place of new birth.

Let us shine with the light of your love.

We turn from the crib to the cross.

Let us shine with the light of your love.

We go to carry his light.

Let us shine with the light of your love.

Thanks be to God.

Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, who was wounded for our sins,
that you may bear in your life the love and joy and peace
which are the marks of Jesus in his disciples;
and the blessing of God almighty
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among us and remain with us always.

Amen