

We Respond

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) Your merciful love, O God, we have received in the midst of your temple. Your praise, O God, like your name, reaches the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with saving justice.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 23)

ANTIPHON: Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

RESPONSE: Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

LECTOR: O gates, lift up your heads; grow higher, ancient doors. Let him enter, the king of glory! **R.**

LECTOR: Who is the king of glory? The Lord, the mighty, the valiant, the Lord, the valiant in war. **R.**

LECTOR: O gates, lift high your heads; grow higher, ancient doors. Let him enter, the king of glory! **R.**

LECTOR: Who is he, the king of glory? He, the Lord of armies, he is the king of glory. **R.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION Alleluia! Alleluia! This is the light of revelation to the nations, and the glory of your people Israel. Alleluia!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) My eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples.

TODAY'S READINGS Mal 3:1-4; Heb 2:14-18, Luke 2:22-40.

NEXT WEEK (5th Sunday, Year A) Isaiah 58: 7-10; Psalm 111; 1 Cor 2:1-5; Matthew 5:13-16

*Want to Learn
more?*

Daybreaks Daily Reflections for Easter and Lent is that annual journey that takes us into the depths of God's mystery. For many who must juggle life's daily demands, Lent often seems to pass by with little opportunity for spiritual growth. But in this booklet, world-renowned spiritual writer Father Ron Rolheiser provides reflections for each day of Lent and Easter Week that are short and clear enough for the busy person, yet provocative, and challenging to the spirit. The booklet is available from Majellan Media for \$7.50 (postage included). For more information contact us at 03 9592 2777 or office@majellan.org.au

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*The need to
belong*



2 February 2020 Presentation of the Lord Year A

I once baptised three adults at an Easter Vigil. They had a sense of joy and awe during the Easter celebration, especially during their baptism. At the end of Mass, the happy trio said they felt liked they "belonged".

Today, we celebrate the feast of the Presentation of the Lord which occurs forty days after the birth of Jesus. The circumcision of Jesus marked his acceptance into the covenant community. This feast tells us that God belongs to our human community. God is incarnate within a family and in a social context. The Son of God enters into the ordinary experiences of human life, even being subjected to the law, in order to bring about the salvation of all.

Luke tells us how Jesus is presented in the temple, as was required by the law of circumcision and purification, obligatory for Jewish firstborn males. This religious practice is written in the book of Exodus of how the Lord spared the life of the Israelite firstborn when he slew the firstborn of the Egyptians. The original idea was that the firstborn male belonged to the Lord and would spend his life serving the Lord.

There were two Jewish customs behind the story. There were two different Jewish customs. One was about the purification of a Jewish mother after childbirth. The other was about the 'redemption' of the firstborn male in a Jewish family. The actions taken

by Joseph and Mary fulfil what the law prescribes regarding circumcision of the child and purification of the mother. God comes to humanity to be under the law like everyone else.

The prophet Simeon, inspired by the Spirit, praises God for what is revealed. He has now seen the coming of the one who will bring salvation for all peoples. He praises God for the deliverance of Israel that is now fulfilled. God is at work in the world. Jesus' presentation therefore, signifies God's entrance into His temple to be present to his people.

For those who are searching for God, the challenge is to find the presence of God in the ordinary world. Sometimes, the pressures of secularism and modern life can reduce our sense of God's presence in the here and now. Busy schedules, dual-career marriages, and after-school activities can weigh us down, and sensing God's presence in everyday events is difficult. Families eat fewer meals together and prayer before meals is observed in far fewer homes today.

Today's feast reminds us of what the Holy Family did to express their deepest awareness of God and their dedication to God's will. Mary and Joseph saw God at work in events they had experienced. May we always recognise the presence of God in our daily commitments.

Anthony Tran CSsR

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