

Pro-Cathedral

2 February 2022

The Feast of the Presentation

Welcome

January went by quickly and today marks forty days since Christmas, when we celebrated the birth of Jesus.

Topic

The feast and the readings are very attractive and to me they suggest three lines of reflection.

Steps

The line is a very human one. Every birth is a gift from God. Even if parents are not practicing and don't want to have a child baptised, nevertheless they have, in becoming parents, touched the mystery of God, the source of all life. The wonder of giving birth takes us to a sense of being blessed, gifted really, another word for the grace of God. Looking at it from the other side, each one of us, when we were born, was a source of such wonder and blessing, grace and gratitude.

You may never have noticed but there seem to be very few old people in the New Testament. In our Gospel today, there are two Simeon and Anna, both in their way attractive in their old age. They are models of faithfulness and prayer, deeply engaged even in advanced old age. Simeon, especially, is also at peace with the next stage of life: now you can dismiss your servant, O Lord – part of night prayer for those who read pray the breviary. Both Simeon and Anna are an inspiration.

Finally, this is a feast about Jesus. Forty days since Christmas, we are invited again to reflected on what happened for us in the birth, ministry, teaching, death and resurrection of Jesus. Perhaps the letter to the Hebrews says it most simply: Jesus can help us because he is like us. He knows from the inside what it is to be human. In the words of the Letter: *because he himself has been through temptation, he is able to help those who are tempted.*

Conclusion

Every birth is a grace; the birth of Jesus was God's grace for all humanity, answering the longing of the human heart in every age. Today the very same Jesus comes to our help, guiding us to becoming fully human that we may become divine.

Almighty, ever-living God,
on this day your Only-Begotten Son
was presented in the Temple,
in flesh and blood like ours.
Purify us in mind and heart
that we may meet you in your glory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.