

Prayer

O God, who were pleased to give us
the shining example of the Holy Family,
graciously grant that we may imitate them
in practicing the virtues of family life
and in the bonds of charity,
and so, in the joy of your house,
delight one day in eternal rewards.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen



Our Catholic faith and the teaching of the Church enable us to affirm the truth about marriage and family:

We believe that in baptism we have become sisters and brothers in Christ for him and for each other, our first responsibility as Christians and as family members.

We believe that, for the baptised, Christ has raised the married state to the dignity of a sacrament.

We believe that, in Christian marriage, a man and woman are joined together as husband and wife in a bond of love that is total, faithful, fruitful and lifelong in which Christ is ever present.



THE CALL, THE JOURNEY AND THE MISSION

An Invitation from the Bishops of England and Wales to Reflect on the Gift of Marriage and Family Life

The presentation of Jesus in the temple



Archdiocese of Liverpool

Week 4

Scripture: Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

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. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided 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, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then 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 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too." 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 seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At 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. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

Questions to ponder

- How might Mary and Joseph have felt as they presented Jesus in the Temple as a baby, as the law required? And in their encounter with Simeon, and then Anna? Does this echo with any experience in your family life?
- What do you wonder about your own children/grandchildren/wider family?
- Who have been the wise people for you? And in your family experience? What makes them wise?
- How do you engage across the generations in your family? What are the challenges and the joys?
- How do Church teaching and the sacraments support you in your family life?
- In what ways has the Church supported your living and sharing of faith as a parent or grandparent with your children/grandchildren?

Bishops' Question

How does your marriage enrich you?

Record your responses.