

The Presentation of the Lord (Year C)

Luke 2:22-40

'The child grew, filled with wisdom.'

When the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, 'Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord') and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons'.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the Temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

'Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.'

And his father and his mother marvelled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed – and a sword will pierce through your own soul also – so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.'

And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the Temple, worshipping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favour of God was upon him.



Reflection

"The child grew, filled with wisdom" reminds us that growth—both physical and spiritual—is a journey.

How do you learn from your experiences? Simeon and Anna remind us that we must wait with patience and hope. Simeon's words about Jesus being "a sign that is opposed", show that pursuing our beliefs can bring challenges. Reflect on a time you faced opposition—what did you learn? Mary and Joseph found support in their community; who supports you? As you reflect, think about how you can grow in wisdom. Embrace your journey!

Materials needed

- Paper and pens



Activity

- Read aloud the phrase: "The child grew, filled with wisdom". Invite participants to consider areas in their life where they are experiencing growth.
- Ask participants to spend a few minutes reflecting quietly and jotting down their responses to these questions:
 - What are you waiting or hoping for in your life?
 - Who supports you during challenging times?
 - Reflect on a recent experience that helped you grow. What did you learn?
- In small groups or pairs, invite participants to share one insight from their reflections if they feel comfortable to do so.

Call to Action

- Encourage each participant to choose one small step they can take this week, to grow in wisdom or support someone else. It could be reaching out to a mentor, reading a book on a skill they want to improve, or offering encouragement to a friend.