

LORDSBRIDGE TEAM OF CHURCHES



The Feast of Candlemas – 31st January 2021
Read Luke 2.22-40

You may like to use this material as a basis for discussion in your family.

The birth of a baby is a very special time, a time of joy and celebration. Think about the way we celebrate the birth of a baby. What sort of gifts do the new parents receive for the baby? Is there usually a party? Sometimes parents arrange with the vicar to have a service of thanksgiving at church or to say prayers of thanks to God for the safe birth of their baby. Today's gospel reading tells us that Mary and Joseph took the baby Jesus to the Temple to give thanks for his birth. They gave the temple priests two doves, which was the traditional offering for a baby's birth. Then Mary and Joseph met two special elderly people, called Simeon and Anna.



Simeon held the baby Jesus and said a special prayer. We sometimes use this prayer in church. The name for it is "Nunc Dimittis" – these are the first words of the prayer, "Now, O Lord", translated into Latin because in the past church services were all said in Latin. Imagine learning all your prayers in Latin! Simeon recognises Jesus as the Messiah or saviour. Simeon says that God promised that he would meet the Messiah before he dies, and so he says a prayer of thanks to God. Can you imagine how Simeon felt?

Then another elderly person meets Jesus. This is Anna; a widow who spends her time praying in the Temple. She also recognises Jesus as the Messiah. She is so excited that she passes on this wonderful news to everybody she meets. Have you ever been so excited about something that you wanted to tell everyone about it?

Simeon and Anna are like grandparents at the birth of a new baby – happy and excited. I have two grandchildren and I love spending time with them. Just like Simeon and Anna I was very excited when I met them for the first time and held them in my arms. If you have grandparents ask them how they felt when you were born.

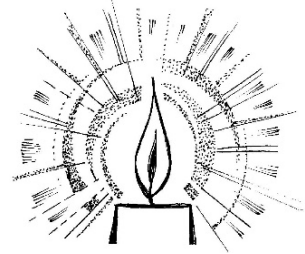
This Sunday is sometimes called the feast of Candlemas. This is because we think of Jesus as a great light coming into the world, like a candle in a dark room. The candle glows with light and warmth and makes the room seem brighter and cosier. Jesus brings warmth and light into our lives.

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Activity

- Make a special votive candle to celebrate Candlemas. Important - if you are a young person please ask an adult to help you. Stick coloured tissue paper onto the outside of a small glass. Use PVA glue to provide a clear coating; it sticks well on glass. Place a tealight inside the glass and see how the colours on the glass glow in the dark.



Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are the light of the world. The radiance of your love shines even in the darkest corners of our lives and our troubled world. May your Christlight shine with us now and always. **Amen.**