



# Liturgy of the Word with Children

Te Ritenga o te Kupu hei ngā Tamariki

Prepared by the Liturgy Centre, Catholic Diocese of Auckland

## The Presentation of the Lord, Year A

White

*"A light for all nations"*

Malachi 3:1-2b, Psalm 24:7, 10; Luke 2:22-32

Mary and Joseph bring Jesus to a temple ceremony to offer Jesus to the service of God. Simeon recognises Jesus as the Messiah, 'a Light for all nations!' Can you imagine how Simeon would have felt? He had so longed for this day. Today we celebrate the Light that has come to us through Jesus and pray that we will shine with his brightness.



### Leader's Preparation

In preparation for leading this celebration begin by reading and reflecting on the Scriptures for the Presentation of the Lord, starting with the Gospel. (You may choose to use or focus on one reading only, but remember that the Gospel may not be omitted.) Then look through the preparatory material that follows and familiarise yourself with the Liturgy Outline.

## GOSPEL

Luke 2:22-32

The time came for Mary and Joseph to do what the Law of Moses says a mother is supposed to do after her baby is born. They took Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem and presented him to the Lord, just as the Law of the Lord says, "Each first-born boy belongs to the Lord." The law of the Lord also says that parents have to offer a sacrifice, giving at least a pair of doves or two young pigeons. So that is what Mary and Joseph did. At this time a man named Simeon was living in Jerusalem.

Simeon was a good man. He loved God and was waiting for God to save the people of Israel. God's spirit came to him and told him that he would not die until he had seen Christ the Lord. When Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple to do what the Law of Moses says should be done for a new baby, the Spirit told Simeon to go into the temple. Simeon took the baby Jesus in his arms and praised God, saying, "Lord, I am your servant, and now I can die in peace, because you have kept your promise according to me; With my own eyes I have seen what you have done to save your people, and foreign nations will also see this. Your mighty power is a light for all nations, and it will bring honour to your people Israel."

## FIRST READING

Malachi 3:1-2b

The Lord All-Powerful says, "I will send my messenger to prepare the way for me. Then suddenly the Lord you are longing for will come to his temple. The messenger you are eagerly looking for will come and announce my promise to you. Who can face him on that day? Who will be able to stand?"

## PSALM

Psalms 24: 7, 10

**Response: The Lord of hosts: he is king of glory!**

Open the ancient gates,

So that the glorious King may come in. **R**

Who is this glorious king?

He is our LORD, the All powerful! **R**

*Scriptures from the Lectionary for Masses with Children (CEV)*  
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### *Background to the Readings for Leaders*

Today the Church celebrates the feast of the Presentation of the Lord which occurs forty days after the birth of Jesus. The Christ Child is revealed as the Messiah through the canticle and words of Simeon. Christ is the light of the nations. In many countries, there is a blessing and procession of candles on this day and is called Candlemas Day.

St John the Baptist who was born 6 months before Jesus, was sent by God to prepare His way. It is clear that Malachi's prophecy in the first reading meant that *suddenly* after the Precursor (the last Prophet before Jesus), the Lord Himself will come. So, soon after the Baptist's birth, God entered His temple. Jesus' presentation signifies God's entrance to His temple.

Mary and Joseph respected the Mosaic Law by offering the sacrifice prescribed for the poor: a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Simeon was elderly and dedicated to prayer and fasting. This enabled him to recognize the Messiah. The announcement of Simeon in the temple spoke of the Lord's work of saving all people.

### *Images from the Readings*

- Messenger
- Temple
- Waiting for God
- Lord, I am your servant
- A Light for all nations

## *Reflection for Leaders*

Mary and Joseph offered Jesus to the service of God at this ceremony. How do you serve God in your daily life?

Simeon was able to recognise Jesus as the Messiah. What enabled him to do this? He was committed to prayer and fasting. How do you see the fruits of prayer and fasting in your life? Sometimes we can see that God is at work in other people, particularly when they are doing kind deeds and using loving words. Who at the moment do you see as a visible instrument of God's Love? Why?

Sometimes it can be difficult to see God working through people. We need to pray for help to see God in relationships that we find testing.

Light is symbolic of God's presence. We light the candle when the Word of God is being read to symbolise his presence. Can you think of other places where you recognise God's presence?

At our own baptism a candle was lit. Why do you think Light is used to symbolise God?

## *Reflection on the Readings with the children*

Before Sunday read over the suggested discussion points given in the Leader's Liturgy Outline.

With the 8-12 year olds: First, listen to the children's own responses to the Reading/s and then, if needed, use some of the discussion starters suggested.

With the 5-7 year olds: Adapt some of the questions in the 8-12 material and then join with the older group for the 'Liturgical Action'.

## *Suggested Focus*

Prepare a focus for the area where the children's Liturgy of the Word is to be held:

*Light a few candles in the shape of a heart, representing God's love for us*



# LEADER'S LITURGY OUTLINE

## *The Presentation of the Lord,*

At a suitable moment after the Opening Rites, but before the First Reading is proclaimed, the children are presented with the Children's Lectionary and a candle and sent, with their ministers, to the place where they will celebrate their own Liturgy of the Word, with words of dismissal such as the following:

*INVITATION – Pōwhiri*  
procession for their

I invite the children to join in the  
celebration of the Liturgy of the Word.

**To the Minister of the Word:**

Receive this Book of Readings and proclaim God's Word  
faithfully to the children entrusted to your care.

Receive this candle as the light of Christ who is present in  
his Word.

*PROCESSION WITH THE BOOK OF READINGS – Te  
Kapa o te Pukapuka Tapu*

*WELCOME – Ko te whakatau*

**Leader:** O God, your light shines brightly for all the world to see. Help us to live in your  
light.

**R** Amen.

*First Reading:* **Malachi 3:1-2b**

(if used)

The Word of the Lord / Ko te Kupu a te Ariki  
**Thanks be to God / Whakamoemiti ki te Atua**

*Psalm 24: 7, 10*

(if used) **Response: The Lord of hosts: he is king of glory!**

D G Bm A D G Asus<sup>4</sup> A

General: Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Fill us O Lord with your word.\_\_\_\_

Bm G D A G A D

Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Your word is life for our souls.

## Gospel: Luke 2:22-32

**Minister of the Word:** A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

**Children:** **Glory to you, O Lord / Korōria ki ā koe, e te Ariki**

**At the end of the Gospel:** The Gospel of the Lord

**Children:** **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ / Kia whakanuia rā koe, e te Ariki, e Hēhu Karaiti.**

## REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH THE CHILDREN – Whai Whakaaro

**Suggested Beginning:** A good place to begin is with the question: What did you hear? Allow children the opportunity to respond in their own words to hearing the Word of God. Then begin a general discussion; building on these responses, perhaps using some prepared questions, like the following, to stimulate ideas.

- At your baptism a candle was lit. They are often lit in other situations. Can you think of some? What does it mean?
- Mary and Joseph offered Jesus for the service of God. Would you like to serve God? How can you do so today?
- Simeon recognised the baby Jesus as the one who will save all nations. He had waited for a long time to see the Messiah. Can you imagine how Simeon would have felt?
- Do you sometimes recognise God in other people? Who? Why?

## *LITURGICAL ACTION – Ko te Ritenga Karakia*

Invite children to come forward to look at the lit candles. Invite them to share words that come to mind when they see the candles lit. For example, Light, brightness, God, hope, love....



## *PROFESSION OF FAITH – Panui o te Whakapono*

We believe in God the Father,  
who made the whole world.  
We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God,  
who was born in Bethlehem  
and lived among us,  
who died on the cross for us,  
and rose from the dead.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit  
who brings life and love to us all.  
We believe that the Church is one family,  
and that one day  
we will share everlasting life  
with God in heaven.  
Amen.

## PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL – *Te Īnoinga o te Hunga Whakapono*

(Here are some suggested intercessions; you are encouraged to compose your own according to the age and experience of the children)

**Leader:** Believing the promises of the Word we have just heard, let us call upon God for all our needs:

- For the Church, that we will rejoice in the Lord our Saviour, the Light of the world

Let us pray to the Lord                    **R**                    **Lord hear our prayer**  
or                    **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- That we will recognise Christ in each other

Let us pray to the Lord                    **R**                    **Lord hear our prayer**  
or                    **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- That we will shine brightly with the Light of Christ

Let us pray to the Lord                    **R**                    **Lord hear our prayer**  
or                    **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

- That we will live a life of service to God

Let us pray to the Lord                    **R**                    **Lord hear our prayer**  
or                    **E te Ariki whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou**

**Leader:** Loving God, help us to share your love and all that you have given us, to make this world shine brightly with your presence. We pray this through Jesus Christ our Lord

**All:**                    **Amen.**

The children rejoin the assembly before the completion of the prayers over the gifts.