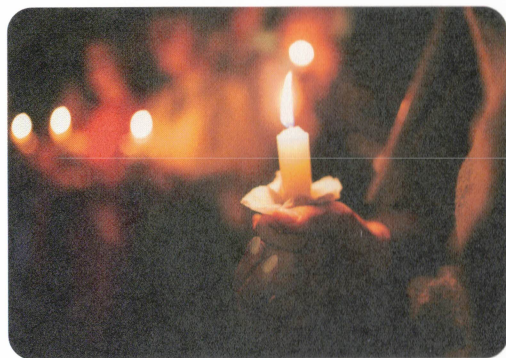


Dear Padre,

What happened to Candlemas? When I was a child, there was one day when everyone brought candles to church to have them blessed. At the end of Mass, the priest would bless everyone's throats with the candles.



EVANR/LOV / SHUTTERSTOCK

Candlemas is another name for our celebration of the Presentation of the Lord: the day Mary and Joseph presented their child to God in the Temple at Jerusalem in accordance with the law of Moses (Luke 2:22–38). We remember how the elderly believers Simeon and Anna recognized Jesus as their longed-for Messiah and how, addressing God in a canticle, Simeon proclaimed Christ to be “a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel” (Luke 2:32).

Mass on this day often begins with the blessing and lighting of candles, which the priest and people carry into the church. The name Candlemas springs from this ritual blessing.

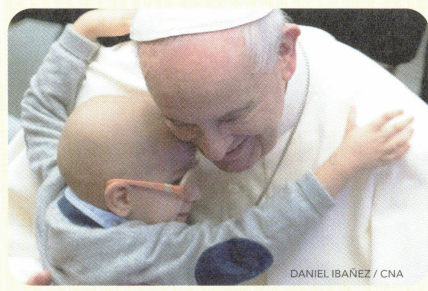
The day after the feast of the Presentation is the memorial celebration of St. Blaise, bishop and martyr. According to tradition, St. Blaise was instrumental in healing a person who was choking. The Church remembers this encounter and celebrates the intervention of the Spirit of God through the blessing of throats, using the blessed candles from the feast of the Presentation. It is a wonderful and very practical spiritual practice that is much appreciated and anticipated each year. ●

Fr. Thomas M. Santa, CSSR / DearPadre.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
February 3 Weekday Heb 11:32–40 Mk 5:1–20	February 4 Weekday Heb 12:1–4 Mk 5:21–43	February 5 St. Agatha, Virgin and Martyr Heb 12:4–7, 11–15 Mk 6:1–6	February 6 St. Paul Miki and Companions, Martyrs Heb 12:18–19, 21–24 Mk 6:7–13	February 7 Weekday Heb 13:1–8 Mk 6:14–29	February 8 Weekday Heb 13:15–17, 20–21 Mk 6:30–34	February 9 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Is 6:1–2a, 3–8 1 Cor 15:1–11 or 15:3–8, 11 Lk 5:1–11



DANIEL IBÁÑEZ / CNA

A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

Like Simeon, let us also pick up this child, the God of newness and surprises.... Let us be restless, let us be moved by the Spirit, like Simeon and Anna.... If, like them, we live in expectation, we will embrace Jesus, who is the light and hope of life.

HOMILY, ROME, FEBRUARY 2, 2024

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Our Parish COMMUNITY

February 2, 2025

The Presentation of the Lord

Malachi 3:1–4 / Hebrews 2:14–18 / Luke 2:22–40 or 2:22–32



Blessings of Many Shapes

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

It is always a blessed and holy occasion when parents bring their child to the parish church for baptism. They gather family and friends and proudly present their child to both God and the faith community. Somewhere in the midst of it all, they will wonder who their child will become, what their child’s gifts and talents will be, and what hopes and dreams their child will have. Yet like Simeon, who blessed the Holy Family in the Temple, they will also realize that life is not always favorable to us. As Simeon foretold, “Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many...and you yourself a sword will pierce” (Luke 2:34–35).

Although we recognize that suffering is a part of everyone’s life, and we would never wish it upon a child, we might hope that the child does not run from every suffering, for it becomes the path to wisdom and compassion—perhaps the only path. We might also wish on the child a bit of loneliness, for it teaches us to treasure friends. And amid hoping for the blessing of success, losing can also be a gift and a blessing, for it is how we learn to deal with failure and understand the important lesson that we cannot always have our own way. Failure can be the seed of humility. Fortunately, while doing our best as parents, we must allow God to decide how our children will be blessed and what will nurture their growth into the image of Jesus. We simply present them to God from whom they came. ●

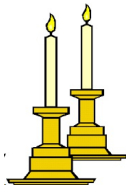
Reflect

Call to mind someone you love deeply and remind yourself that God loves him or her even more.



When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Mary and Joseph] took [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

LUKE 2:22



The
Catholic Church
in Pocahontas County
West Virginia

OUR MISSION

My house shall be called
a house of prayer
for all peoples ...
others will I gather to them
besides those already gathered.
(Isaiah 56:7, nab-re)

ST. JOHN NEUMANN PARISH & CHURCH OFFICE, 714 Tenth Avenue, Marlinton WV 24954
ST. MARK THE EVANGELIST MISSION, 92 Catholic Church Road, Rts 250 & 92, Bartow WV 24920
ST. BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX CHAPEL, 6332 Snowshoe Drive, Snowshoe WV 26209
Telephone: St. John Neumann 304-799-6778, St. Bernard of Clairvaux 304-572-0847
Website: PocahontasCatholic.org
E-mail: Pastor@PocahontasCatholic.org



Charlie & Patty Bryant
Margaret Bryant
Ann Burke
Danielle Cade
Phillip Cobb
Alisa Harvey
Ethan Hoke
Sally Logan
Drema Moore
Cynthia Olson
Quinn Riffle

EUCCHARIST THIS WEEK

Monday 8:00 a.m. St. John
Wednesday 8:00 a.m. St. John
Friday 8:00 a.m. St. John
Saturday 5:30 p.m. St. Bernard
Sunday 9:00 a.m. St. John
11:30 a.m. St. Mark



*St. John Neumann Church is open for private prayer every day during daylight.
The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered before each Eucharist or by appointment, and at St. Bernard on Saturdays 4:30-5:00 p.m.
The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is available any time upon request.*



Please call the Church office (304-799-6778) if you know of a parishioner who is sick, in the hospital or nursing home, homebound, deployed, or in prison.

To report an incidence of suspected child sexual abuse, please contact your local law enforcement agency, or you may confidentially contact WV Child Protective Services at 800-352-6513.
To report suspected cases of sexual abuse by personnel of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston to the Diocese, please contact the Diocese at 888-434-6237 or 304-233-0880.
To report suspected cases of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse by a bishop or eparch, please contact ReportBishopAbuse.org or call 800-276-1562.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE PASSAGE
*"A light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and glory for your people Israel."
(Luke 2:32, NAB-RE)*

ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTES

- **Everyone is welcome** to help take down our Christmas decorations this Saturday at St. Bernard, and this Sunday at St. John Neumann and St. Mark the Evangelist. By current practice, the Christmas season ends with the *Feast of the Baptism of the Lord*, but an older tradition extended the Christmas season for 40 days until the *Feast of the Presentation of the Lord*, celebrated this weekend.
- **German immigrants** started *Ground Hog Day* in Pennsylvania in the nineteenth century, on the same day as the *Feast of the Presentation of our Lord*, which celebrates the presentation of Jesus Christ in the temple in Jerusalem, 40 days after his birth, "*A light for revelation to the Gentiles.*" Also called *Candlemas*, the feast would begin in a darkened church with people lighting candles from a single flame. Being during the long dark days of winter, often weather would be predicted based on whether or not the sun was out. And so the badger (in Germany) became the groundhog (in the USA), seeing or not seeing its shadow, supposedly predicting the early or late coming of spring.



- All adult parishioners are invited and encouraged to complete the "**Disciple Maker Index**," a survey that will take 10-15 minutes to complete, either on-line or on paper, and your responses are confidential. For the on-paper survey, there are copies at each Church, and please return those to Fr. Arthur by February 9 (Sunday) at the latest. For the on-line survey go to:
for St John Neumann: <https://portal.catholicleaders.org/dmi/survey/x1pdx>
for St Mark the Evangelist: <https://portal.catholicleaders.org/dmi/survey/x235bx>

	LAST WEEKEND	
	attendance	collection
St. John Neumann	37	\$695.00
Developing World collection		\$20.00
St. Mark the Evangelist	6	\$100.00
Developing World collection		\$40.00
St. Bernard of Clairvaux	78	\$885.00
Fund for the Poor		\$395.00
total	121	\$2,135.00

PRESENTATION OF THE LORD - FEBRUARY 2

First Reading (Malachi 3:1-4)

Thus says the Lord GOD:
Lo, I am sending my messenger
to prepare the way before me;
And suddenly there will come to the temple
the LORD whom you seek,
And the messenger of the covenant whom you desire.
Yes, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.
But who will endure the day of his coming?
And who can stand when he appears?
For he is like the refiner's fire,
or like the fuller's lye.
He will sit refining and purifying silver,
and he will purify the sons of Levi,
Refining them like gold or like silver
that they may offer due sacrifice to the LORD.
Then the sacrifice of Judah and Jerusalem
will please the LORD,
as in the days of old, as in years gone by.

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 24:7, 8, 9, 10,
Grail Psalms, revised, 2010)

Response: Who is this king of glory? It is the Lord!

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is this king of glory?
The LORD, the mighty, the valiant,
the LORD, the valiant in war.

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient door.
Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is this king of glory?
He, the LORD of hosts,
he is the king of glory.

Second Reading (Hebrews 2:14-18)

Since the children share in blood and flesh,
Jesus likewise shared in them,
that through death he might destroy the one
who has the power of death, that is, the Devil,
and free those who through fear of death
had been subject to slavery all their life.
Surely he did not help angels
but rather the descendants of Abraham;
therefore, he had to become like his brothers and sisters
in every way,
that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest
before God
to expiate the sins of the people.
Because he himself was tested through what he suffered,
he is able to help those who are being tested.

Gospel Acclamation (Luke 2:32)

A light of revelation to the Gentiles,
and glory for your people Israel.

Gospel (Luke 2:22-40)

When the days were completed for their purification
according to the law of Moses,
Mary and Joseph took Jesus up to Jerusalem
to present him to the Lord,
just as it is written in the law of the Lord,
Every male that opens the womb
shall be consecrated to the Lord,
and to offer the sacrifice of
a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,
in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem
whose name was Simeon.
This man was righteous and devout,
awaiting the consolation of Israel,
and the Holy Spirit was upon him.
It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit
that he should not see death
before he had seen the Christ of the Lord.
He came in the Spirit into the temple;
and when the parents brought in the child Jesus
to perform the custom of the law in regard to him,
he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:

“Now, Master, you may let your servant go
in peace, according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples:
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and glory for your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother
were amazed at what was said about him;
and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,
“Behold, this child is destined
for the fall and rise of many in Israel,
and to be a sign that will be contradicted
– and you yourself a sword will pierce –
so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”
There was also a prophetess, Anna,
the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.
She was advanced in years,
having lived seven years with her husband
after her marriage,
and then as a widow until she was eighty-four.
She never left the temple,
but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer.
And coming forward at that very time,
she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child
to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions
of 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 favor of God was upon him.

Reflection

Christmas is the feast of the coming of the Light, Jesus Christ, into the world. It is celebrated at a time when the darkness of winter decreases and the light of day increases. The feast of the presentation of Christ in the temple again celebrates the coming of the Light, Jesus Christ, into the world, 40 days after his birth on Christmas night.

Simeon was awaiting “the consolation of Israel,” that is, the coming of the Messiah. When he sees the baby Jesus, he realizes that this is “the consolation of Israel,” the Messiah. He proclaims him “a light for revelation to the Gentiles,” interestingly enough, not just “the consolation of Israel.”

So we celebrate Christmas, once again, we celebrate light, once again, and we recognize that this Light, Jesus Christ, is for everyone, Jews and Gentiles.

2 February 2025
Presentation of the Lord - February 2

Penitential Rite

Lord Jesus, you are mighty God and Prince of peace: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you are light to all nations: Christ have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are savior of the world: Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

Prayer of the Faithful

Almighty Father, we join with our brothers and sisters, lifting up our needs in prayer:

- for unity and harmony in the Church, we pray
- for unity and harmony in our country, we pray
- for immigrants and refugees, we pray
- for parents and children everywhere, we pray
- for those who are marginalized, we pray
- for peace where Christ was born, we pray
- for those who have died, for their salvation, we pray
- and for your other intentions

(pause)

for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, we pray

Merciful Father, we ask you to hear our prayers, and fill us with the light that comes from the coming of your Son. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.