

A VISIT TO THE TEMPLE

(LUKE 2:22-40)



The atmosphere of Luke's two chapters about the circumstances of Jesus' birth is very much that of the world of the Hebrew scriptures.

The evangelist emphasises that the Messiah grew up in a family and social setting steeped in the traditions of Israel. His "parents" and the elderly couple in today's Gospel episode represent all that is best in the people, those who are open to the Spirit and to the word of God. Luke mentions five times "the Law of the Lord" which underlines their fidelity to the practice of their religion. The scene takes place at the very heart of Israel's religious focus, the Temple in Jerusalem.

Simeon is a prophet who indicates in his song that the mission of Jesus will provoke different reactions: those who encounter Jesus will have to decide whether to accept him and his message or not. Mary represents the people of Israel, and the sword which will pierce her soul represents the act of judgement or discernment which will accompany this encounter: it is the blade which will penetrate the deepest part of the person to see what she or he is made of, to discover the decision they have come to about Jesus and his message. It is out of those who welcome Jesus, like Simeon and Anna, that the new people of God will be composed.

Luke notes that the family returns to Nazareth and that the child grew up like any other, so the Son of God was a true human being. ■

REFLECT

Luke's infancy narrative has been called "the Gospel in miniature": all the main themes which will appear in the story of Jesus and his ministry are stated here and developed later. One motif which emerges from today's readings is the division which Jesus will cause among his hearers. Not everyone by any means will react in a positive way and their hostility will lead to his death on the cross. Each person will have to decide whether to accept Jesus or not. Those who welcome him will form the new people of God.

No one in the Gospel story is a disciple in isolation: even Peter is one of the circle of disciples. Although each disciple has a personal relationship with Jesus the Master, we are all members of a wider group, which we call the Church. Luke emphasises that the righteous characters in the story of Jesus are faithful members of Israel, deeply attached and devoted to the traditions of their people. The purpose of such practices is to bring them close to God and to deepen their commitment. We might remember that the definition of the Church today is "the people of God". The purpose of our celebrating the Eucharist together is not just to celebrate our faith (or simply to fulfil an obligation) but also to give support to our fellow parishioners. If someone is struggling, it can be an immense help and encouragement to see others turning up every week. ■

SAY

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.
(Traditional song)

LEARN

The name Jesus (and its Hebrew form *Joshua*) means "the Lord saves".

Luke often pairs a male and female character in his writing, for example Simeon and Anna.

The sword which will pierce Mary's soul is the sword of judgement, not of sorrow.

DO

Look around at the other people at the Eucharist: consider how your presence can be a support to someone who is struggling – and they to you.



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Permanent Deacons: Rev. Peter Mascarenhas and Rev. John Penny

27th December 2020 The Holy Family

Saturday Boxing Day	26	6.30pm	Vigil Mass St Stephen	Rev Fr Michael Flateley RIP Natalie Procter RIP Norris Cooper RIP Anniversary Adrienne Mascarenhas (sick)
Sunday	27	9.30am	Mass The Holy Family	Ken Wilcox RIP Anniversary Deceased members of Klusiatis Family Mann Family Lockerbie Anniversary
Monday	28		The Holy Innocents	
Tuesday	29	10.00am	Mass St Thomas Becket	Blanche Wilgose RIP Recently Deceased
Wednesday	30		Sixth Day of Christmas Octave	
Thursday	31	10.00am	Mass Seventh Day of Christmas Octave	Priest's Intention
Friday	1	10.00am	Mass Mary the Mother of God	The Parish
Saturday	2	6.30pm	Vigil Mass Sts Basil the Great and St Gregory Nazianzen	St Peter's SVP India Nell Riley RIP
Sunday	3	9.30am	Mass Second Sunday after Christmas	Lotty Murphy RIP Recently Deceased Adrienne Mascarenhas (sick) John and Sheila Wilson RIP

IN NEED OF A PRIEST Please contact Fr Grace on 01270 877736

Prayer and Mass Intentions can be sent by email to us at stannesnantwich@btinternet.com

*Fr. Tony, Fr. Michael, Deacon Peter and Deacon John
Thank you for all your cards and best wishes*

And

*Wish you all
a Peaceful New Year*



200 Club December Draw Congratulations to the winners:- 1 £100 Mrs M J Sainter, 2 £60 Eileen Miller, 3 £40 Noel Wagstaff. 2021 will be the 17th consecutive club year of fund raising to help our Parish meet its day to day running costs. To date your membership has raised nearly £37,000. The extreme difficulties we are experiencing has placed extra strain on the Parish finances, so we need as many members as possible to help us through 2021. We are looking forward to you renewing your membership - or most importantly: PLEASE JOIN OUR COMMUNITY IF YOU ARE NOT A MEMBER! The cost is £52 for the year, or 2 instalments of £26. Please see notices in church or on the website or contact Michael Wilcock mjwilcock64@gmail.com

St. Anne's Catholic School Admissions We are welcoming lots of new families to our school community. We still have a few places left for our Pre-School Nursery Sunflowers and School in 2020/2021. If you know anyone who is new to the area and/or is looking for a place, please let them know to contact us at office@stannes.cheshire.sch.uk or 01270 685353. For school places parents need to apply through Cheshire East Admissions. Details are on School website. Parents must apply by 15th January 2021 for Reception places for September 2021.

Caritas at Christmas Appeal 2020: There will be a collection basket available. Thank you for your support. Your donations will go to those most vulnerable within the Diocese, ensuring they have a Christmas meal and gifts to celebrate the Nativity of Christ and create happy memories in a time of crisis.

Community Hub Hooray!! We have reached our 1st initial target of £173k and can now progress to planning permission stage. Thank you to everyone who has donated, this really does mean a lot to the Parish and community. We need to continue fundraising to reach our next target of £87k to reach £260k. Please do help by making donations via this link <https://app.thegoodexchange.com/project/17726/st-annes-church-nantwich/st-annes-community-hub> or to the presbytery.



Thank you for your donations over Christmas

Envelopes, standing order and gift aid forms are available from the Presbytery. Online donations <https://investmycommunity.com/not-logged-donor/page/stannesdioceseofshrewsbury2168>



St Anne's Christmas Mass Timetable (May be subject to change depending on Covid rules)	
Boxing Day	6:30pm
27 December 2020	9:30am
29 December 2020	10am
31 December 2020	10am
New Year's Day	10am
02 January 2021	6:30pm
03 January 2021	9.30am
05 January 2020	No Mass today
06 January 2021 Epiphany	10am

Pope Francis' prayer for December: Pope's December prayer intention: 'For a life of prayer' In a video message for his December prayer intention, Pope Francis speaks about the power of prayer to change reality and our hearts, and prays that, through a life of prayer, we may nourish our relationship with Jesus Christ. <https://youtu.be/0c3CEj4MKk>

Prayer in Difficult Times – Talks by Fr. Matt Blake OCD Drawing on the Carmelite tradition to help us pray and live deeply our Christian lives during this time of lockdown. Monday November 30th Times: 10.00am and repeated at 8.00pm www.carmelitechurch.org You Tube "Kensington Carmelite Church" You'll notice that the talks, as well as being given live at 10.00 am and 8.00 pm and streamed from the Kensington Carmelite Church will also be streamed on YouTube, where they will continue to be available as recordings.

Diocese of Shrewsbury's prayer for the ending of the pandemic <http://www.dioceseofshrewsbury.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/National-Day-of-Prayer-for-the-ending-of-the-pandemic.pdf>

Nantwich and Rural communities Newsletter link <https://www.cesap.org.uk/your-social-action/>

Nantwich CAP Job Club is returning in a limited capacity. We now have planned 2 free courses in January 2021:


January 12th 3 week CAP Money
January 19th 8 week "Steps towards Employment"

mary's
meals

a simple solution to world hunger

Donate

Give from today until 31 January 2021 and your donation will be doubled by the UK government, up to £2 million – meaning we can reach even more hungry children in Liberia with life-changing school meals.



Sanctuaries, shrines Catholics can 'visit' virtually in Europe, Mideast. <https://catholicsentinel.org/Content/Arts/Arts-and-Entertainment/Article/Sanctuaries-shrines-Catholics-can-visit-virtually-in-Europe-Mideast/6/31/40431>

Journeying Together <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/journeying-together/>

Shrewsbury Youth Mission. <https://www.svmt.org.uk/>

The National Shrine for Our Lady of Walsingham www.walsingham.org.uk/livestream

Laudato Tree <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/world/news/2020-05/laudato-tree-sahel-pope-francis-laudato-si-year.html>

Watch a Mass from home. Live-streaming of Masses Shrewsbury Diocese: <http://www.churchservices.tv/shrewsburycathedral/embed#tab-player> Church Services TV: <https://www.churchservices.tv/timetable/>

Prayer resources at: <http://pathwaystogod.org/>. <https://www.sacredspace.ie/> <http://ln54.blogspot.com>
<http://prayasyougo.org/>

Catholic Bishops Conference <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/> and latest news <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/news-and-media/news/>

Prayer for times of Flu or Illness <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/03/prayer-flu-viruses.pdf>

Stream Father Denis McBride's Mass for the Dead <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pY1bOyrcDbw>

Life Helplines and Information can be found at <http://www.dayforlife.org/article/helplines-and-information-2020/>

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

The shepherds went in haste,
and found Mary and Joseph and the infant
lying in a manger.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who were pleased to give us
the shining example of the Holy Family,
graciously grant that we may imitate them
in practising 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.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of
the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING Genesis 15:1-6; 21:1-3

A reading from the book of Genesis.

The word of the Lord was spoken to Abram in a vision, "Have no fear, Abram, I am your shield; your reward will be very great."

"My Lord," Abram replied "what do you intend to give me? I go childless..." Then Abram said, "See, you have given me no descendants; some man of my household will be my heir." And then this word of the Lord was spoken to him, "He shall not be your heir; your heir shall be one of your own flesh and blood." Then taking him outside he said, "Look up to heaven and count the stars if you can. Such will be your descendants" he told him. Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.

The Lord dealt kindly with Sarah as he had said, and did what he had promised her. So Sarah conceived and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the time God had promised. Abraham named the son born to him Isaac, the son to whom Sarah had given birth.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 104

Response:

He, the Lord, is our God.

He remembers his covenant for ever.

1 Give thanks to the Lord, tell his name,
make known his deeds among the
peoples.

O sing to him, sing his praise;
tell all his wonderful works! (R.)

2 Be proud of his holy name,
let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice.
Consider the Lord and his strength;
constantly seek his face. (R.)

3 Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, the judgements he spoke.
O children of Abraham, his servant,
O sons of the Jacob he chose. (R.)

4 He remembers his covenant for ever,
his promise for a thousand generations,
the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac. (R.)

SECOND READING Hebrews 11:17-12:17-19

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out for a country that was the inheritance given to him and his descendants, and that he set out without knowing where he was going.

It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive, because she believed that he who had made the promise would be faithful to it. Because of this, there came from one man, and one who was already as good as dead himself, more descendants than could be counted, as many as the stars of heaven or the grains of sand on the seashore.

It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac. He offered to sacrifice his only son even though the promises had been made to him and he had been told: it is through Isaac that your name will be carried on. He was confident that God had the power even to raise the dead; and so, figuratively speaking, he was given back Isaac from the dead.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

At various times in the past
and in various different ways,
God spoke to our ancestors through the
prophets;
but in our own time, the last days,
he has spoken to us through his Son.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 2:22-40

(For shorter form, read between ><)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke.

>When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord< – observing what stands written in the law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

"Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace,
just as you promised;
because my eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared for all the nations
to see,

a light to enlighten the pagans
and the glory of your people Israel."

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and

a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare."

There was a prophetess also, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

>When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.

The Gospel of the Lord.<

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;

through him all things were made.

For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
(all bow during the next three lines)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and
glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

We offer you, Lord, the sacrifice of
conciliation,
humbly asking that,
through the intercession of the Virgin Mother
of God and Saint Joseph,
you may establish our families firmly in your
grace and your peace.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Our God has appeared on the earth, and
lived among us.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Bring those you refresh with this heavenly
Sacrament,
most merciful Father,
to imitate constantly the example of the Holy
Family,
so that, after the trials of this world,
we may share their company for ever.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

