

## Candlemas, 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021



In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The Lord of glory be with you.

**The Lord bless you.**

### *The Lighting of Candles*

Blessed are you, Lord our God,  
King of the universe.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

Your light shines on us  
and all peoples shall see your glory.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

You gave us Jesus to be the light of the world;  
he makes our darkness to be light.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

Through the Holy Spirit your love burns within us,  
bearing witness to your truth.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

As we see your light,  
may our lips never cease to sing your praise.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Blessed be God for ever.**

### *Prayers of Penitence*

Hear the words of our Saviour Jesus Christ:

'I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me shall never walk in darkness  
but shall have the light of life.'

Let us therefore bring our sins into his light  
and confess them in penitence and faith.

*cf John 8.12*

**Father eternal, giver of light and grace,  
we have sinned against you and against our neighbour,  
in what we have thought,  
in what we have said and done,  
through ignorance, through weakness,  
through our own deliberate fault.  
We have wounded your love,  
and marred your image in us.  
We are sorry and ashamed,  
and repent of all our sins.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
who died for us,  
forgive us all that is past;  
and lead us out from darkness  
to walk as children of light.  
Amen.**

Almighty God,  
who forgives all who truly repent,  
have mercy upon *you*,  
pardon and deliver *you* from all *your* sins,  
confirm and strengthen *you* in all goodness,  
and keep *you* in life eternal;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen**

*The Collect for the day*

Let us pray that we may know and share the light of Christ.

Lord Jesus Christ,  
light of the nations and glory of Israel:  
make your home among us,  
and present us pure and holy  
to your heavenly Father,  
your God, and our God.  
**Amen.**

*Hearing and responding to the Word of God*

*(We encourage you to look at the readings in your own time and will continue with the Gospel)*

## **First Reading:** Malachi 3.1-5

Thus says the Lord God: <sup>1</sup>See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight – indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>2</sup>But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup>he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. <sup>4</sup>Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

<sup>5</sup>Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

## **Psalm 24.** (1-6)7-10

- 1           The earth is the Lord's and all that fills it,  
              the compass of the world and all who dwell therein.
- 2           For he has founded it upon the seas  
              and set it firm upon the rivers of the deep.
- 3           'Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord,  
              or who can rise up in his holy place?'
- 4           'Those who have clean hands and a pure heart,  
              who have not lifted up their soul to an idol,  
              nor sworn an oath to a lie;
- 5           'They shall receive a blessing from the Lord,  
              a just reward from the God of their salvation.'
- 6           Such is the company of those who seek him,  
              of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.
- 7           Lift up your heads, O gates; be lifted up, you everlasting doors;  
              and the King of glory shall come in.
- 8           'Who is the King of glory?'  
              'The Lord, strong and mighty,  
              the Lord who is mighty in battle.'
- 9           Lift up your heads, O gates;  
              be lifted up, you everlasting doors;  
              and the King of glory shall come in.
- 10          'Who is this King of glory?'  
              'The Lord of hosts,  
              he is the King of glory.'

## **Second Reading:** Hebrews 2.14-18

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make

atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

### **Gospel:** Luke 2.22-40

When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons”.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,  
you now dismiss your servant in peace.  
For my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the sight of all people,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

### *Reflection*

### *Prayers of Intercession*

Let us pray to the Father through Christ who is our light and life.  
Father, your Christ is acclaimed as the glory of Israel:  
look in mercy on your Church, sharing his light.  
Lord, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Father, your Christ in his temple brings judgement on the world:  
look in mercy on the nations, who long for his justice.  
Lord, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Father, your Christ, who was rich, for our sakes became poor:  
look in mercy on the needy, suffering with him.  
Lord, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Father, your Christ is the one in whom faithful servants find their peace:  
look in mercy on the departed, that they may see your salvation.  
Lord, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Father, your Christ is revealed as the one destined to be rejected:  
look in mercy on us who now turn towards his passion.  
Lord, have mercy.

**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord God, you kept faith with Simeon and Anna,  
and showed them the infant King.  
Give us grace to put all our trust in your promises,  
and the patience to wait for their fulfilment;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*For the Nation*

Loving Father God,  
be with us in our distress;  
be with our families, friends, and neighbours,  
our country and our world.  
Give health to the sick,  
hope to the fearful,  
and comfort to mourners.  
Give wisdom to our frontline and key workers,  
insight to our Government,  
and patience to us all.  
Overcome disease with the power of your new life,  
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*Benefice Prayer*

God who made everyone and who may be found in every place, bless our parishes and Benefice, prosper our attempts to be faithful to you and to draw others to you.  
Inspire us by the power of your Holy Spirit that we may be a caring people, the true community of the body of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,  
to the mercy and protection of God.

Merciful Father,  
**accept these prayers  
for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ.  
Amen.**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be done;  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation;  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.**

Father, here we bring to an end our celebration of the Saviour's birth.  
**Help us, in whom he has been born,  
to live his life that has no end.**

Here we have rejoiced with faithful Simeon and Anna.  
**Help us, who have found the Lord in his temple,  
to trust in your eternal promises.**

Here we have greeted the light of the world.  
**Help us never to forsake the light of Christ.**

Here we turn from Christ's birth to his passion.  
**Help us, for whom Lent is near,  
to enter deeply into the Easter mystery.**

Here we bless one another in your name.  
**Help us, who now go in peace, to shine with your light in the world.  
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the  
Holy Spirit, be with us all now and evermore. Amen.**