

It's written, toward the end of the Gospel, with Simeon, Anna **and all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem**. Waiting for the Christ. Waiting for salvation. **Waiting** word here means "to watch in expectation."

Waiting in expectation. We all waited in expectation for a new year, 2025, expectation of a fresh start, a new beginning, a new government, of what a new year will bring. 1 month in. Deadly terror attack, historic deadly winter storm and deadly fires, horrible plane crash.

But then we have some in our congregation waiting in expectation for a wedding this year, some waiting for a special trip, some waiting with pregnancies. How we wait, with all we see going on, speaks much about our faith.

The Gospel began, **when the time came**, better translated **when the time was brought to completion**, or **in the fullness of time**. For what we see in Mary's purification, in Jesus presentation -the universe being changed. The Old Covenant with its sacrifices unto the forgiveness of sins, with its static location, and its longing for the time of the coming of the Messiah is being brought to its fullness. He has come to fulfill all the Levitical Law, so that you could sit that and be holy. He brings the Law to completion by His own presence. And Mary, too poor to afford the customary sacrifice of a lamb, offers 2 birds. But nevertheless, she did bring the Lamb without blemish there, the very fulfillment of 1000s of 1000s of sacrifice, day and night, now He comes to be a sacrifice for them, you, redemption, forgiveness of sins; the temple coming now unto the nations.

Like Mary, you have been purified by our Lord; you are holy; made holy through the flesh of Him whose flesh is the holy and living Word of God, even greater for you that that day at the Temple, you are joined to Him in the Supper. Our Lord has Himself **performed everything according to the Law of the Lord** to bring forth forgiveness even unto the likes of us wretched Gentiles.

Waiting in expectation. St. Luke tells us Anna, how night and day, she **departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers**. Her life revolves around the liturgy, life formed by God's Word. Like Simeon, she was **waiting for the consolation of Israel**. Anna's waiting, advent lasted years rather than weeks. She was a woman of wisdom, knew where to be (God's house of worship), what to do (fasting and prayer), and how persistent in faith (night and day) as she waited for the Lord to answer, waited in expectation, placing her entire being, her eternal peril, commended herself to God.

Anna was among the most pious of saints ever to live. God did, in the end, make her worthy of the immeasurable gift of consolation, the consolation of the whole world. Among the first to see the Savior of the universe. I think Anna was possibly one of the very few saints who, so very unlike you and me, never thought of God as an unjust, unfair, unreasonable for us to wait; think that God should work in different ways, according to our timeframe. Rather, pious Anna constantly meditated upon God's gracious character. A lesson for you.

And coming up at that very hour Anna began to give thanks to God and to speak of Him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Israel. You are told this and elsewhere, to show you this is the pattern of each day, each new year, to wait in expectation for the Lord, for what it means to be Christian; to live a liturgical life revolving around God's word, His promises, to fast and pray and be where the Lord has promised to come to you, to be in His presences, with you for your redemption, forgiveness.

Your prayer, wait is answered every Sunday to be in the presence of the Lord here. For your eyes to see His glory as in no other way and place on earth. Why the Church throughout the world for centuries sings the Nunc Dimittis right after the Lord's Supper, as you were just in the presence of Your Lord, no less, no less this day, than Simeon and Anna that day, even greater for you, and for this alone -you can depart in peace.

Each week, waiting in expectation we come here and sing with Simeon, **Lord lettest now Thy servant depart in peace.** We depart this place, to our homes and life, depart with the peace that comes by being joined to Christ and the forgiveness of sins. Like Mary, we bear Christ in our bodies, His flesh connected to ours, His blood mingled with ours, His righteousness having become ours, His eternal life given to us by grace as life eternal which is also ours. Peace. We go out into the world. We can depart this place in peace. Even if today is our last we can depart in peace according to Your word. Since that day, why pastors sing the Nunc Dimittis over the dying.

That is how we endure. That is what we see. We must see, as did Simeon, by the Spirit. We must see, as did Simeon, that this Child is God, is God for you, is God with you, is God as One of us to make us like Him. Death and Satan cannot have you. You have eternity before you.

Waiting in expectation. **Lord, now You let Your servant depart in peace.** Not knowing what tomorrow will bring, or the rest of this 2025, but you can be sure, going out those doors every week; that no what comes, what happens in the world, our country, no matter what life will throw at you, no matter what happens in your home, your health, your family, no matter what, even if death comes today. You depart in peace from here. You are joined to Christ. His Word is fulfilled. And that changes everything, for eternity for you.

Your day, this year will be good for one reason, for **He is good and His mercy endures forever.** This year will we be well for you solely because **He does all things well** (people confess of Him). **He does all things well.** Nothing is more true in your life. Live liturgically. You're always waiting in expectations in this live. Your eyes have seen His salvation, your salvation, the Light to gladden your heart, guide you, that you depart from here with His name, His works go with you. Waiting in expectation, of hope, even excitement of what the Lord is working and doing your life. And one day your wait, expectation will be complete, your eyes will fully see, in the presence of the Lord for all eternity.