



ST JOSEPH SYRO MALABAR CATHOLIC MISSION SAN DIEGO

15546 Pomerado Road, Poway CA 92064

[HTTP://WWW.SANDIEGOSYROMALABAR.COM](http://www.sandiegosyromalabar.com)

REV FR SONEY SEBASTIAN SVD

## Sunday Readings and Meditation

February 2 Sun

✠ Fifth Sunday of Epiphany

Lk 2:22-38 - Presentation of our Lord in the temple

Today's Gospel says:

...they brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"...

The actual ritual is not described, but we are introduced to two elderly people who were in the Temple at the time.

The first of these was a devout man called Simeon. He had been told that he would not die until he had first laid eyes on the promised Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, he came into the Temple and recognized Mary's child as the long-awaited Messiah. He makes a prayer of thanksgiving to God for answering his prayer "for my eyes have seen your salvation". And what he has seen is:

...a light for revelation to the gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel.

Jesus, the Incarnate Word of God, is a divine revelation to the non-Jews and the glory of God's own people from whom he came.

Mary and Joseph are quite amazed at the words being spoken. There is a lot they still do not know about their Son. But Simeon then had some ominous words for the Mother:

This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul, too.

This is the paradox of Jesus. He comes as Savior bringing life for the whole world, and yet there will be people who will reject his message of truth and life. His own people will be deeply divided over him. This will be a source of deep pain for his Mother, something she will not realize fully until she sees him die in agony before her eyes. Though at the time, Simeon's words must have been very puzzling and even alarming to Mary and Joseph.

The second person to greet the parents and their Child was another deeply religious person. She was Anna, who:



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*...lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four.*

*She spent all her time in the Temple in prayer and fasting. On seeing the Child, she gave thanks to God and spoke about him to everyone she met.*

*In the past, when this feast was called the Purification of Our Lady, there was for a long time a custom in the Church for mothers to go through a purification ceremony after giving birth. Such a rite is now seen as unnecessary, but the revised Rituale Romanum (Roman Ritual) still provides for the blessing of women both before and after birth. The latter is only in cases where the mother could not be present at the baptism of her child. In general, it would seem highly appropriate for a special blessing to be given to mothers on this day.*

*The feast is now called the Presentation of Our Lord and the emphasis is more on Jesus than on his Mother. The blessing and the procession of candles, as well as the Scripture readings, focus on Jesus who is the "Light of the World".*

*First Reading: Lev 12:1-8*

*Second Reading: Is 42:1-7*

*Third Reading: 9:30-10:4*