

## TODAY'S MUSIC

**Entrance Hymn:** "Immaculate Mary"

**Kyrie:** XI

**Gloria:** VIII

**Creed:** III

**Sanctus:** VIII

**Agnus Dei:** VIII

**Exit Hymn:** "Hail Holy Queen"

*The Ordinary Chants can be found in the Roman Kyriale. If you are using the Roman Catholic Daily Missal (Angelus Press) or The Roman Missal (Baronius Press) the Kyriale can be found near the end; pages 1865 & 2147 respectively.*

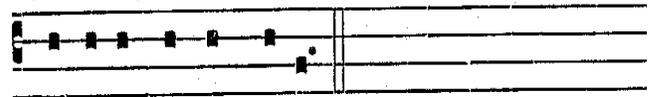
### **The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

In the Law of Moses a woman after childbirth had to stay at home for a certain period and abstain from touching anything consecrated to God. This was a state which the Law called 'unclean'. I imagine it must have been a blessing to her being thus allowed to stay at home and care for her baby.

Our Blessed Lady, the purest of virgins, in her great humility, came like every other mother for this ceremony of her 'purification', desirous as she was to honour God by every prescribed observance and act of religion. And being poor, she and St Joseph brought the offering appointed for the poor.

A second great mystery is honored this day—the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple. A first born son had to be offered to God and then ransomed back. So Our Blessed Lady would have offered her Son to the Father, and then St Joseph would have paid the priest five shekels. Then she would have received Him back in her arms and they would have been free to go home.

However, a third mystery is put before us: the meeting of Simeon with our Savior. For years Simeon had been praying for the coming of the Messiah. Like the prophet Daniel, he was a 'man of desires' and God had told him that he would live to see the One he so longed for. So besides the titles of Presentation (of Our Lord) and Purification (of Our Lady), this feast is also called in the East, 'the Meeting' (of Simeon with the Infant Jesus).



Procedámus in páce.

*Le Chœur répond .*



In nómine Christi. Amen. *ou* : Amen.

And because of Simeon's prophecy that Our Lord would 'be a Light to enlighten the Gentiles' the custom grew up of celebrating the feast with candlelight processions. And so the title of 'Candlemas' was also given to the day.

We see Our Lord, in the hands of His Mother, offering Himself as a victim to His Father. That is what we can do: indeed, at Mass it is what we should do. In the hands of Our Lady, we should offer Jesus to our heavenly Father, and offer ourselves with Him and in Him. That is a good way of praying at Mass.

Or maybe we prefer to put ourselves with Our Lady. What is she doing? She is offering to God the most precious thing in her life, indeed, that which is more precious to her than life itself. She is offering her Divine Son. Like her ancestor Abraham, she is offering absolutely everything to God. What a perfect model for us! Exceedingly difficult, no doubt, but it is a sacrifice that will be pleasing to God for all eternity.

Like Our Lady, then, we can pray for the grace always to be generous with God, always ready for any sacrifice he may ask of us. That was how the world was redeemed. That is the way we ourselves can ensure our own salvation and bring others to heaven with us. It is the daily carrying of the Cross. Great fidelity to the holy will of God in the little things of every day is what Thomas a Kempis called the Royal Road of the Holy Cross and St Therese calls her Little Way.

Yes, the Feast of the Purification provides rich fare for our souls! [*Fr Hugh Thwaites SJ. Taken from the Latin Mass Society's February 2003 Newsletter.*]