

COLLECT

Almighty and ever-living God,
clothed in majesty,
whose beloved Son

was this day presented in the Temple,
in substance of our flesh:
grant that we may be presented to you
with pure and clean hearts,
by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

FIRST READING Malachi 3:1-5

A reading from the book of the prophet Malachi.

Thus says the LORD God: 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. 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; 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. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. 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

Either Psalm 24:[1-6] 7-end

R *The Lord of hosts,
he is the king of glory.*

or

R *The Lord whom you seek
will suddenly come.*

[The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
the world and all who dwell therein.
For it is he who founded it upon the seas
and made it firm upon the rivers of
the deep. **R**

"Who can ascend the hill of the Lord?
and who can stand in his holy place?"

"Those who have clean hands and a
pure heart,
who have not pledged themselves to
falsehood,
nor sworn by what is a fraud. **R**

They shall receive a blessing from the
Lord
and a just reward from the God of
their salvation."
Such is the generation of those who
seek him,
of those who seek your face, O God
of Jacob. **R]**

Lift up your heads, O gates;
lift them high, O everlasting doors;
and the King of glory shall come in.
"Who is this King of glory?"
"The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, mighty in battle." **R**

Lift up your heads, O gates;
lift them high, O everlasting doors;
and the King of glory shall come in.
"Who is he, this King of glory?"
"The Lord of hosts,
he is the King of glory." **R**

Or Psalm 84 (RCL only)

SECOND READING Hebrews 2:14-end

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews.

Since the children share flesh and blood,
Jesus himself likewise shared the same
things, so that through death he might
destroy the one who has the power of
death, that is, the devil, and free those
who all their lives were held in slavery
by the fear of death. For it is clear that
he did not come to help angels, but
the descendants of Abraham. Therefore
he had to become like his brothers and
sisters in every respect, so that he might
be a merciful and faithful high priest in
the service of God, to make a sacrifice
of atonement for the sins of the people.
Because he himself was tested by what
he suffered, he is able to help those who
are being tested.

GOSPEL Luke 2:22-40

*Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.*

When the time came for their purification
according to the law of Moses, Mary and
Joseph 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"), and they offered a sacrifice

according to what is stated in the law of
the Lord, "a pair of turtle-doves or two
young pigeons." Now there was a man in
Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this
man was righteous and devout, looking
forward to the consolation of Israel, and
the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been
revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he
would not see death before he had seen
the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit,
Simeon came into the temple; and when
the parents brought in the child Jesus,
to do for him what was customary under
the law, Simeon took him in his arms and
praised God, saying, "Master, now you
are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word; for my eyes
have seen your salvation, which you have
prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles and
for glory to your people Israel." And the
child's father and mother were amazed
at what was being said about him. Then
Simeon blessed them and said to his
mother Mary, "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." There was also a
prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel,
of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great
age, having lived with her husband seven
years after her marriage, then as a widow
to the age of eighty-four. She never left
the temple but worshipped there with
fasting and prayer night and day. At that
moment she came, and began to praise
God and to speak about the child to all
who were looking for the redemption
of Jerusalem. When they had finished
everything required by the law of the
Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their
own town of Nazareth. The child grew
and became strong, filled with wisdom;
and the favour of God was upon him.

POST COMMUNION

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon
and Anna,
who lived to welcome the Messiah:
may we, who have received these gifts
beyond words,
prepare to meet Christ Jesus
when he comes to bring us to eternal
life;
for he is alive and reigns, now and for
ever.