

Advent Reflection Resources

Week 5 - Temple Rejoicing



The Bible Passage

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 worshiped 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.

~ Luke 2:25-38



Ways to enter the story

You might like to relive the story, as Mary, Joseph, Simeon or Anna, or maybe an unnamed onlooker, and take the opportunity to talk to Jesus, to pray and worship. It might help to read or listen to the passage again. If you find it hard to keep focused while imagining things, you could try writing your reflection down. Or maybe you're artistic, and you want to paint or draw something related to the story.

Here are some questions to ponder as you respond.

Who do you identify with in this story? If you were to place yourself in Simeon's shoes, what does it feel like to embrace the Son of God?

Are there tasks or vocations in your life that you have been glad to lay down when they are complete, like Simeon?

Does your Christian calling to follow Jesus feel exciting, or daunting, or maybe even daunting?

Is there a psalm that expresses your mood at the present? You could write one for yourself which expresses everything you feel.

Click on this link to hear a meditative version of the Nunc Dimittis, sung by the Taizé community: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRjSiduxioM&ab_channel=Taiz%C3%A9-Topic

