



**WELCOMING
CHILDREN
in WORSHIP**

**THE CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA** 

Presentation of the Lord February

Adaptive Activities for Children



**National Catholic
Partnership on Disability**

© 2024

Introduction

Welcome and thank you for your ministry that serves the liturgical formation of children for their participation in the Eucharist, the “source and summit of the Christian life.” This resource is provided by the Committee on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability (NCPD). It aims to offer an adaptive catechetical opportunity for all who have a heart for disability ministry to reflect on the liturgical year. We welcome you to this virtual community and hope you find this resource beneficial.

Here you will find reflections to guide children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, or diverse learners, through the current liturgical season with adaptive catechesis to help them to participate fully. Each offering includes prayer, Scripture, activities and more that incorporate the senses and take into consideration the needs of all learners. We invite you to gather children around the table of the home or the table of the classroom as preparation for their participation at the sacred table of the Eucharist.

Each monthly edition incorporates the following:

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Sacred Scripture**
- 3. Reflection**
- 4. Faith in Action**
- 5. Activities**
- 6. Saint**
- 7. Resources/Bibliography**

Prayer for the Presentation of the Lord

Celebrated on Feb 2

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Leader:

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph were Jewish and followed Jewish law as describe in the Bible. The presentation of the Lord is a time to remember when Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple for a blessing and his faith community saw Jesus for the first time. Jewish law, as outlined in Leviticus 12:6-7, required Mary to bring a lamb as an offering. Mary did so and the priest prayed over Mary and declared that she was, once again, pure in the eyes of God.

Have you heard Jesus called the Lamb of God? Just as Mary sacrificed a lamb, God sacrificed his son to save us from our sins, to make us pure.

But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of his son Jesus cleanses us from all sin. (1 John 1:7)

Let us pray:

Loving God, you so loved the world that you sent your only son. Your son, Jesus, was fully man, and fully divine. Lord, help us to reflect on the beauty of your human and divine nature. We thank you for the gift of your son, who died for our sins. Help us as we reflect on the magnitude of your love and help us as we draw ever closer to your heart.

Amen.

Note: Song Suggestion - *Presentation of Jesus*

<https://youtu.be/sqXlovIEYrc?feature=shared>



"The Presentation in the Temple" by Giaquinto
Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of Mrs.
Ralph Pulitzer

Reading of Sacred Scripture:

Luke 2:22-38

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses, they took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, just as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord,” and to offer the sacrifice of “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,” in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel, and the holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Messiah of the Lord. He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to perform the custom of the law in regard to him, he took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:



Nheyob, CC BY 4.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

“Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

The child’s father and mother were amazed at what was said about him; and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted (and you yourself a sword will pierce) so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer. And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



Darstellung des Herrn by François Ragot (Stecher_in) - Albertina, Austria - Public Domain.
https://www.europeana.eu/item/15508/H_II_21_12

Gospel Reflection

When Jesus was just a baby, Joseph and Mary brought him to their priest in the temple, their church. This presentation was part of their faith tradition and is something we are encouraged to do today. God wants us to do this and take our babies to church and present them to him in his house, to declare that this baby is a part of our faith community and to thank God for the life of the baby.

When Joseph and Mary appeared at the temple there were also other people there who love God. Picture a young couple walking into your parish holding a baby. People would greet the couple and gaze at the baby, making

comments about how good or pretty or big or handsome the baby is. Maybe the same thing happened with baby Jesus, but two people had unusual reactions. Simeon and Anna saw in the baby Jesus what he was to become, how important he would be. Mary and Joseph knew that Jesus was different, and here are two strangers who also know and talk about it to everyone around them. How could they have known? Only through the Holy Spirit.

Why did they tell everyone?

Think about that for a minute. They know this truly great thing, and they are so overjoyed knowing what baby Jesus will do that they cannot help but share the great news! When you learn good news, don't you want to share it with others and have them share in that joy? And what better news than the news that this baby would fulfill God's promises and be our salvation?

Imagine being there when Jesus was presented in the temple. Imagine yourself there as either Joseph, Mary, Simeon or Anna. What do you see and how might it feel to be there when Jesus is being presented in the temple?



"Presentation in the Temple." Hodges and della Porta.
Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of Belinda L. Randall from the collection of John Witt Randall

Faith in Action

Candlelight Procession: Celebrate the feast by having a family candlelight procession, representing the recognition of Jesus as the "Light of the Nations" (Luke 2:32). You can use battery-operated candles or glow sticks to ensure safety for children with different abilities.

- Begin with a simple explanation of the feast day. Share how Simeon recognized Jesus as the light of the world and how we honor Jesus' light in our lives.
- Each family member holds a candle (real or artificial) and walks around the home or yard in a procession. You could even make your own candles out of toilet paper rolls.
- Sing a simple song like "This Little Light of Mine" or recite the **Nunc Dimittis** ("Lord, now let Your servant go in peace") as you walk.
- Conclude the procession with a prayer asking Jesus to be the light of the world in your home.

Adaptations: For children with motor or mobility challenges, offer the option of holding a large picture of a candle or participating in the procession through hand motions.



Image from Vecteezy

Create a "Temple" Craft: Encourage children to create their own version of the Temple of Jerusalem, where Jesus was presented, to honor the sacred space where Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to be blessed.

Materials Needed: Construction paper, markers, scissors, glue, cotton balls (for clouds or angels), and stickers of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

- Provide pre-cut templates of a simple building or temple or allow children to draw their own.
- Have children decorate the temple with images of Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus (either pre-cut or drawn by the children).

- Add symbols of light, like candles or a glowing star at the top of the temple, to remind everyone that Jesus is the Light.
- Talk about how we present ourselves to God and ask for his blessings, just like Mary and Joseph did with Jesus.

Adaptations: For children who might struggle with fine motor skills, provide larger shapes, and let them focus on the creative aspect, such as coloring and decorating.

Light and Dark Sensory Exploration: A sensory-based activity to reflect on how Jesus is the light that dispels the darkness. Children will explore light and dark in a safe, hands-on way.

Materials Needed: A flashlight or lamp, dark room or blanket fort, reflective surfaces (aluminum or mirror), glow sticks, and various sensory objects (e.g., soft fabric, beads, or textured items).

- Create a dark space (like a blanket fort or dimmed room).
- Show children how the flashlight or lamp lights up the room, then talk about how Jesus brings light into our lives.
- Have children feel and explore different sensory items in the dark with the light shining, emphasizing that light reveals things hidden in the darkness.
- End with a brief prayer, asking Jesus to be the light in their hearts.



Image from Vecteezy

Adaptations: For children with sensory sensitivities, offer a variety of light sources and allow them to choose what feels comfortable, from soft night lights to bright flashlights.

Candle Prayers and Blessings: Using candles to pray, families can ask for Jesus' light to shine in their lives, especially during difficult or dark times.

- Light a candle at the beginning of the prayer time.
- Invite each family member to say a short prayer aloud, asking Jesus to guide them through the day or for special intentions.

- Encourage children to pray for others, including persons who are sick, lonely, or need light and hope.
- After everyone has prayed, extinguish the candle together to symbolize offering up their prayers to God.

Adaptations: For children with limited verbal abilities, use pre-written prayer cards or symbols (like a picture of a heart or a smile) to represent their prayers.

Nunc Dimittis (Simplified with AI Technology)

*"Lord, now let Your servant go in peace,
Your Word has been fulfilled.
My own eyes have seen the salvation,
Which You have prepared in the sight of all
people,
A light to reveal You to the nations,
And the glory of Your people Israel.
Amen."*

Explanation: This is the prayer Simeon says upon seeing the baby Jesus in the temple, recognizing him as the light of the world. Say this prayer together as a family and reflect on Jesus.



Image from Vecteezy

Suggestions for Accessible Participation

- For children with limited verbal skills: Use visual aids (such as pictures, symbols, or sign language) during prayers to help them participate. For example, during the Nunc Dimittis, show a picture of Simeon holding the child Jesus and use simple gestures like raising hands to represent "light."
- For children with sensory sensitivities: Offer alternative sensory experiences such as softer lighting, different textures, or calming music during the candlelight procession and other activities.
- For children with physical disabilities: Adapt activities like the procession to allow them to participate in a comfortable way—perhaps by using a wheelchair-friendly space or holding a symbolic item like a picture of a candle.

Activities with Children

Retell the Gospel

Retelling the story and having children participate in some way can enhance understanding and interest. Have them act it out or use puppets like the images available for free at Catholic Inspired: <https://catholicinspired.design/product/the-presentation-of-our-lord-pdf/>

Some tips:

- For more durable puppets, use cardstock and laminate
- The creator recommends taping the puppets to craft sticks. If your child has difficulty grasping, try something larger like an empty soda can or bottle.
- Attach a paper clip to allow the craft stick to stand without holding it.
- Ask questions and prompt to think about emotions and tone of voice as kids act out the story.



Image from Canvas

Prayer Extension

The mysteries of the Rosary give us something specific to think about as we pray. Pray the Rosary as a family using the Joyful Mysteries. These focus on the very early life of Jesus and include the presentation of our Lord as the fourth mystery. Instead of just announcing the name of each mystery, give a short description and maybe pose a question. This PDF includes



Image from Canvas

appropriate questions for children. <https://www.holyfamilyparish.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Meditations-for-the-Mysteries-of-the-Rosary-for-Young-People.pdf>

The Annunciation: The angel Gabriel asks Mary to be the mother of Jesus.

The Visitation: Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth. Elizabeth's baby (St. John the Baptist) recognizes Mary's baby (Jesus). Both babies are still in the womb!

The Nativity: Mary gives birth to Jesus in a manger.

The Presentation: Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the temple, and Simeon and Anna recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

The Finding in the Temple: Mary and Joseph fear Jesus is lost. They find him teaching in the temple.

Additional resource: Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary Kids Pray-Along at <https://youtu.be/CnC0tV7IEDM?feature=shared>

Let's Cook

Through a shared meal, Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist. What better way to celebrate this wonderful day than through a shared meal and cooking with our family? The Presentation of the Lord is also known as the "Candlemas" due to the tradition of blessing and distributing candles in procession before the celebration of the Holy Mass. In Europe, one of the most common foods served during Candlemas is crêpes, similar to thin pancakes. Why crêpes? Some say that they look like the sun, which provide us light and remind us that Simeon said Jesus would be the light. Others point out that when you roll the crêpes up, with something yummy inside, they look like candles. Still others say that rolled crêpes look like a baby swaddled and are a reminder of how young Jesus was. Take one of these symbols or all of them, add candles to the top for more reminders of light, and enjoy!



Image from Canvas

If you don't have a favorite crepe recipe, try this one from AllRecipes (<https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/16383/basic-crepes/>)

Ingredients:

2 large eggs

½ cup milk

½ cup water

¼ tsp salt

1 cup all-purpose flour or gluten free flour

2 Tbsp butter, melted

Directions

Whisk eggs, milk, water, and salt together in a large mixing bowl; add flour and butter and whisk vigorously until [smooth](#) .

Heat a lightly oiled griddle or frying pan over medium-high heat. Pour or scoop the



Image from Vecteezy

batter onto the pan, using approximately 1/4 cup for each crêpe. Tilt the pan with a circular motion so that the batter coats the surface evenly.

Cook until the top of the crêpe is no longer wet and the bottom has turned light brown, 1 to 2 minutes. Run a spatula around the edge of the skillet to loosen the crêpe; flip and cook until the other side has turned light brown, about 1 minute more. Serve hot.

You can fill or top your crêpes with whatever you like! Popular choices include whipped cream, fresh fruit, fruit sauce, cream cheese, and Nutella. You can also make savory crêpes with cheese, meats, and veggies.

Saint for February

Saint Agatha

Feast Day: February 5th

St. Agatha teaches us how to fully trust and love God. From a very young age, Agatha consecrated herself to God. One day, a man asked her to marry him, however, she insisted that she already married Jesus. They tried to convince Agatha, but she was determined to keep her decision to devote her life for Jesus no matter what they did. St. Agatha is the patron saint of Sicily and of Breast Cancer.

Pray for the intercession of St. Agatha

Saint Agatha, eloquent confessor of Jesus Christ as Savior, pray for me. Saint Agatha, the martyr who says to Jesus, "Possess all that I am," pray for me. Saint Agatha, concerned with the welfare of all God's children, pray for me. Saint Agatha, pray for me.

On February 5th some regions make and distribute St. Agatha's Bread. This is to ward off a variety of diseases and mishaps. You can make it using the following recipe.



National Gallery of Ireland, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Ingredients

1/2 cup warm water (110 degrees F/45 degrees C)

1/2 cup warm milk

1 egg

1/3 cup butter, softened

1/3 cup white sugar

1 teaspoon salt

3 3/4 cups all-purpose flour or gluten free
flour

1 (.25 ounce) package active dry yeast

1/4 cup butter, softened



Image from Vecteezy

Directions

- ◇ Place water, milk, egg, 1/3 cup butter, sugar, salt, flour and yeast in mixer and knead for 7 minutes.
- ◇ Place dough onto a lightly floured surface. Divide dough in half. Roll each half into a 12 inch circle, spread 1/4 cup softened butter entirely over both circles. Cut each circle into 8 wedges.
- ◇ Roll wedges starting at wide end; roll gently but tightly. Place point side down on ungreased cookie sheet.
- ◇ Cover with clean kitchen towel and put in a warm place, let rise 1 hour. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C).
- ◇ Bake in preheated oven for 10 to 15 minutes, until golden.

Learn more by watching this video about the life of St. Agatha from Christian Family TV:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPNkTPNTbrM>

February Resources

Allrecipes. Basic crêpes. <https://www.allrecipes.com/recipe/16383/basic-crepes/>

Alonso, Tony. "Presentation of the Lord." <https://youtu.be/sqXlovIEYrc?feature=shared>

Catholic Icing. "How to Celebrate Candlemas with Catholic Children." Catholic Icing, 19 Jan. 2020, <https://www.catholicicing.com/ideas-for-celebrating-candlemas-feb-2/>

Catholic Inspired. "The Presentation of our Lord – PDF." <https://catholicinspired.design/product/the-presentation-of-our-lord-pdf/>

Christian Family TV. "Life of St. Agatha." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KPNkTPNTbrM>

Holy Family Parish. Meditations for the Mysteries of the Rosary for Young People. <https://www.holyfamilyparish.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Meditations-for-the-Mysteries-of-the-Rosary-for-Young-People.pdf>

Holy Heroes. "Presentation of the Lord Coloring Page." Holy Heroes. <https://blog.holyheroes.com/feast-of-the-presentation-coloring-page-free-download/>

Kids Talk. "Simeon (Nunc Dimittis)." St. Barts Toowoomba, <https://youtu.be/12oYmlZddUQ?si=Xf51xVpxgBkHbkM1>

Loyola Press. "Presentation of the Lord." Loyola Press, <https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/presentation-of-the-lord-sunday-connection/>

Sadlier Religion. "Presentation of Jesus Story Time." Sadlier Religion, <https://www.sadlier.com>

The Little Rose Shop. "Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary Kids Pray-Along." <https://youtu.be/CnC0tV7IEDM?feature=shared>