

Homily
Presentation of the Lord 2/2/20
Fr Danny

“Lord, now you let your servant go in peace, your word has been fulfilled, my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people, a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel.” - Canticle of Simeon. In those words Simeon was talking about the longing that he had in his life to see the face of God, to see the long awaited Messiah. Those are words that we as Catholics are called to pray every day in the Liturgy of the Hours. The Liturgy of the Hours is our prayer, is our love language with God, and we pray these words every single night when we pray that canticle. Every single night we are called to give thanks to God for all of the blessings that we have in the day and for all of those things that we may not have prepared ourselves for that the Lord prepares our hearts for if and where we allow Him to.

As we come to this celebration today of the presentation of Jesus in the Temple, it's an opportunity for us to see how we have presented our own lives before the Lord. Many of us probably were not presented at two or three years old in the church, because as Americans we have kind of lost that custom. Now in Mexico, it still happens pretty often that a two- or three-year-old is presented in the church, but not so much to God as to Mary. They present their children to Mary to consecrate them before Mary.

But each and every day we have an opportunity, my brothers and sisters, to consecrate ourselves once again to the Lord. He gives us every moment as an opportunity to prepare our hearts to receive Him anew. I think it's beautiful when we hear those words in the canticle of Simeon because he waited his whole life, he was not a young man, but he waited his whole life for this one moment.

What one moment are we waiting for in our lives? Are we waiting to see Christ come again? Are we waiting to see... our kids move out of the house? Are we waiting to see...our kids have their own kids? What moments in our lives are we waiting for, Is the Lord preparing us for? Or, are we just going through life willy-nilly? Are we preparing for sporting events? (49ers are going to win!) Are we preparing for things like that? What things honestly, are placing as a priority. For some of us it is the sporting events above everything. You're an OU fan, you're an OSU fan, you're a Thunder fan, or a Lakers fan, you're a 9ers fan or a Chiefs fan, you're a whatever in the NHL or the MLB that I don't watch fan? We put those things many times as high priorities in our lives.

When it comes to a relationship with God, we think we'll always have time later. But as we see in the heart of the prophetess Anna, and in the expectation of Simeon in today's Gospel,

we could be so much more if we allow ourselves to be put on the back burner and put the Lord first.

We just finished the season of Advent, and today is the “official” end of the season of Christmas (though we’ve had the last three weeks of Ordinary Time.) today technically is the end of Christmas, on the Feast of the Presentation. During the season of Advent, it’s all about preparing our hearts to make room for the Lord to reside. And the season of Lent is preparing ourselves to accept Jesus Christ and His Passion Death and Resurrection for us.

We’re not just called to prepare ourselves during Advent and Lent, though, but every day: God has amazing things to offer us. Are we allowing our hearts to be prepared? Do we start off every morning saying Lord, thank You so much, Lord open my lips that my mouth may proclaim Your praise? Or is it more of a (sigh) ..snooze...snooze...snooze...snooze. Do we snooze our relationship with God the way we snooze our alarm clocks every morning? There’s always going to be time for it..later...

My brothers and sisters, the only moment promised to us is this moment. We know neither the day nor the hour. And “prophets” in time have tried to predict when the Lord is coming. Well, as it’s 2020, we made it past the year 2000, as we made it past the end of the Mayan calendar, as we made it past Nostradamus’ latest anticipation, it proves to us time and time again, that we as humans, do not know the mind of God.

How do we prepare our hearts to receive Him? The best way to begin is to put sin in our rear-view mirror. The reason I talk so much about reconciliation is because unless we are reconciled with God, we are held captive by our sins. And if our sins hold us as slaves and as captives then it’s hard for us to have any room in our hearts for the Lord. We aren’t defining ourselves by His love for us, but by our thoughts, our words, our deeds, our desires and our actions. But that’s not who you are. You are so much greater than those

We exist by God’s grace, by God’s mercy. And He loves us despite all of our flaws, all of our failings, all of our shortcomings. And He continues to offer to us, day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year, the opportunity for salvation. We can’t earn it but we *can* lose it. Salvation is a *choice* to follow the will of God. To respond to His love. When we respond to His love, we have the opportunity to truly prepare our hearts for Him, to prepare ourselves to be presented before Him. Not just here in the church, but on the other side of this life as well. We will be presented before the Lord for judgement on the last day. And He will go through all of our trials, triumphs, and our failures with us. And He will say, “I am here with you now, as I was there with you then. Let me love you now as you *didn’t* let me love you then.” How amazing is that to think about? And no matter how low we feel, how bad the day is, the Lord will not abandon us because of that promise He made to us before He ascended to heaven: “I will be with you always even until the end of the age. I will send my Holy Spirit as your guide.” How many times has God broken His promise in history? Zero. So if He promises us that He will be here with us, just as He promised Simeon that he would not leave this life until

he met the Messiah, we have to believe Him! Because He is who He is and we are who we are . We are His sons and daughters, called to embrace His love and mercy. So, what is it the Lord is calling you to today? How is He calling you to prepare your lives for Him today? Ultimately the question isn't how is He calling us, ultimately the question is, how are we going to respond?