

TRINITY NEWS

Epiphany V. The Glory of God in the Temple

The feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple passed by this week with hardly a ripple in the liturgical cycle of our church. The Orthodox Church throughout the world understands the glory of the moment. The feast is also known as Candlemass. Churches should be ablaze with the lights of candles when the Christ child is carried into the sanctuary. He was safer in the sanctuary that day than at a later time in his life. One day the keepers of the Temple space would no longer welcome him. He too would express his distaste of their turning his Father's house into an emporium.

Sometimes when a child is born we can see in the child's eyes mystery or sadness or a luminous potential that defies description. I saw a child one day being presented for baptism. His name was Peter and his dark-brown eyes glistened with an acute awareness; and future sadness. I watched him grow into a fine young man, and then one day in his family when he was about 16 the earth dissolved beneath his feet, and the sadness in his eyes was no longer in the future. It would always be present to him now.

The Christ is carried into the Temple by his mother and presented to God. He was loved by God in such a way that he could only be the Son of God. Doctrinal definitions do not make him the Son of God. They have their place, but it is the huge love of God for him and through him to humanity that makes him the Son of God. An old man called Simeon was in the Temple when Jesus was carried in that day. He offered Mary and Joseph a blessing from God. Then he took the child in his arms and cried out in the resounding spaces of the temple that this child was indeed the Messiah. He looked into the face of the child and saw the eternity of God. He saw the one that they had waited for so long over endless years. He felt peace flow through him like a river of the Spirit.

We sometimes wait all of our life to find someone or something that pulls it all together. Life is like an unfinished jigsaw that is always waiting for the missing pieces to be found. Simeon was as seeker after truth, he wanted to see God, and he was standing there that day at that hour and that minute so that he could experience it. We are always the right place when God comes looking for us. Martin Heidegger spoke of truth as "unconcealment", though there are always hidden components in the deepest truths. There are no exhaustive definitions of truth. Truth can neither be disregarded nor can it be absolutely defined. But unless it contains in itself a prima facie ("on the surface") meaning that describes what it is being true about, then it is not truth. That day, a

prophet called Anna came into the Temple at a time appointed by God. She began to praise God and to speak of the child as the one to bring redemption to Israel. We do not know her words, but we do know what she spoke about to all who were present. She spoke of the mission of redemption that the child would have in the world as an adult. Christ comes in God's moment to speak to our allotted space of being on earth, and we also arrive at that precise moment to meet him.

So it was with Simeon and Anna and Mary and Joseph and Jesus that day and all who were present. Like Anna, our words of faith fill only the empty spaces of history. But our intention to join the Redeemer on his continuing journey through history will be remembered. Through our faith in him we continue to speak words about him and dream his dreams for a more loving world. We will do greater things by imitating and practising his love than we will ever do in our public achievements. The writer called John asks us to "do the truth", and unless our lives demonstrate a prima facie ("on the surface") meaning that is true in itself, then we will not have truly lived.

Bishop Arthur Jones

Next week's readings: Ecclesiasticus 15:11-20; Psalm 119;

1 Corinthians 5:1-9; Matthew 5:21-24,27-30,33-37

Your prayers are asked in our healing ministry for
Diana Croyston, JPeter, Beryl Tanner, Douglas Tanner, Fidelia Matthews, Carrie Angus, Eric Williamson, Gloria Domingo, Fr. Barry Cumberland, Marian Kermanshahchi, Rosaline Soulsby, Gitte Volk, Robert Go, Marie Cheung, Hajie Agustin, Cena Quiapos.

Official notice is hereby given of the upcoming parish Annual General Meeting next Sunday **February 13, 2011** following the 9:30 service. Please plan to attend.

Nomination forms for vestry positions are available at the Parish Office. Vestry candidates are asked to submit a brief resumé and statement about why they wish to run.

The electoral roll is posted by the office bulletin board. Please check to see that your name is there. If there has been an oversight please let the office know.