

# TRINITY NEWS

## The Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple

The beautiful feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, sometimes called Candlemass, occurs in the universal Church on February 2nd. We celebrate it today to pick up its theme and note some of its inner consistencies with the Gospel of Christ. The colour is gold in keeping with the liturgical colours for feasts that have to do with Christ himself. The term “feast” in the Church does not just mean a hearty meal, but a celebration of an event in the life of Christ or the life of a saint or the mother of Christ or any other spiritual occasion that we can be happy about.

In 1989 just before this feast the holy bishop who had ordained me came to see me. He had retired to a place called Green point near the parish church of St Luke’s at Woy Woy on the Central Coast above Sydney. He said “I will have been a Bishop 30 years tomorrow on the feast of the presentation of Christ. Can I celebrate the Eucharist?” There was no question about that request! He gave a little address on the day in which he spoke about Christ being carried into the Temple in the arms of his mother. He said that she carried the glory of God into the Temple that day as she had carried him in her body. She had been touched by that glory and no one would ever be able to deny it because it would be embedded in the life of the Church as he had been embedded in her body. He said that the first Anglican Prayer Book in 1549 had called her the first of saints, but that she was set apart like no other because she had carried the glory of God within her.

He said that we are all like that in our life. The first journey of our life is to be carried around in our mother’s body. Then we come out to suck oxygen and our mother’s milk and be carried around until such time as we can walk. Then one day we will carry a child of our own and we will look into its face and see the wonder of creation. When a child is baptised we see its face with water dripping from its forehead in the light of a candle, one of the most beautiful sights in the world.

I remember the Bishop’s words because I treasure them. They dripped from his mouth like droplets of verbal gold that touched people’s lives. It was the life behind them that gave them power.

When Jesus was presented in the Temple Simeon took him in his arms and said that he would be a sign of contradiction, that he would cause the secrets of many hearts to be revealed. Simeon could depart this life in peace knowing that he had seen the Lord’s Christ. He had seen the salvation of God. He had caught a glimpse of the purity of God in the face of the child and looked into the eyes of eternity. If he had held the child too tightly he would have crushed the little boy. If he had held him too loosely he would have dropped to the stone floor. It is how we hold a child and how we hold

anything that is precious to us that makes all the difference. Christ caused the secrets of many hearts to be revealed. He was a sign of contradiction in that he showed the glory of God in himself through his human conduct. The rabbis called it *yekara* glory. The contradiction is that he was executed for it. But he was also the Shekinah of God, the unfading glory of God in human form.

Christ carries us when we are children. He has never forgotten his mother's warmth and security. Just as his mother walked away touching his body on the crude stretcher that carried his body from the Cross, so she had touched him and carried him as a little one. It is a wonderful thing to serve him. It is a wonderful thing to see him playing as a child at Nazareth and join him, to walk with him in Galilee, to see him coming to the Jordan and being baptized with him, and going to the Cross and being raised forevermore. He was carried by his mother and he was carried away after the Cross and then he was carried into God. He reaches out to us and still carries us on the journey. We never walk alone. Amen and Amen

Bishop Arthur Jones

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### **THIS WEEK:**

- Monday. Vestry Meeting, 7pm, Parish Office (no dinner)
  - Wednesday. Bible Study, 10am
- Thursday. Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am

### **NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:**

Exodus 34:29-35

Psalm 99

1 Corinthians 12:27-13:13

Luke 9:28-36



### **COMING UP:**

#### **February 12-Pancake Supper.**

Tickets are already available in the parish office.

For those who wish to donate,  
a sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board.

#### **February 13-Ash Wednesday.**

Eucharist at 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.