



Bringing Home the Word

The Presentation of the Lord
February 2, 2025

We Belong to God

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

Everyone wants to belong to someone or something. In fact, we do not merely *want* to belong; we *need* to belong. However, sometimes we forget to whom we really belong. This feast reminds us to whom Jesus belonged. The reading from Hebrews underscores the fact that Jesus was one of us. He also was a descendant of Abraham; thus, we are his brothers and sisters. But he really belonged to God.

The ritual of presentation, a ritual that was and continues to be common in religious Israel, was meant to remind

everyone to whom we belong. True, only male infants were so presented. This reflects the custom of tracing lineage in the family, tribe, or clan through the male line, with women participating through the agency of men. This cultural gender bias need not prevent us from understanding the profound meaning of the presentation: though one of us, Jesus belonged to God.

The gospel story tells of a man and a woman who recognized that this child would be the One through whom God saves all people. It also describes two important religious insights. First, it acknowledges that the child we cherish as one of us really belongs to God. Second, it illustrates how each child has a mission to the world to somehow make it a better place. So even with its gender and cultural bias, this feast is about us as well as Jesus. We all belong to God, and we all have a mission to the world. †

Sunday Readings

Malachi 3:1-4

And the LORD whom you seek will come suddenly to his temple; / The messenger of the covenant whom you desire.

Hebrews 2:14-18

Because he himself was tested through what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

Luke 2:22-40 or 2:22-32

[Simeon said,] "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation."



Sometimes we forget to whom we really belong.

A Word from Pope Francis

[God's] loving plan...embraces and connects the generations.... For the young, this means being ready to break free from the fleeting present in which virtual reality can entrap us, preventing us from doing something productive. For the elderly, it means not dwelling on the loss of physical strength and thinking with regret about missed opportunities. Let us all look ahead!

MESSAGE FOR WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND ELDERLY, ROME, JULY 23, 2023



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- How do I value the energy of the young and the wisdom of the old?
- What can I do to make connections among the generations?

What an Impact One Family Can Have!

Letter to Families from Pope Francis



The evangelist Luke tells us that the Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph, in keeping with the Law of Moses, took the Baby Jesus to the Temple to offer him to the Lord, and that an elderly man and woman, Simeon and Anna, moved by the Holy Spirit, went to meet them and acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah. (See Luke 2:22–38) Simeon took him in his arms and thanked God that he had finally “seen” salvation. Anna, despite her advanced age, found new vigor and began to speak to everyone about the Baby Jesus. It is a beautiful image: two young parents and two elderly people, brought together by Jesus. He is the

one who brings together and unites generations! He is the inexhaustible font of that love which overcomes every occasion of self-absorption, solitude, and sadness. In your journey as a family, you share so many beautiful moments: meals, rest, housework, leisure, prayer, trips and pilgrimages, and times of mutual support.... Nevertheless, if there is no love then there is no joy, and authentic love comes to us from Jesus. †

From *Advent and Christmas Wisdom from Pope Francis* by John Cleary (826467). To order, visit Liguori.org or call 800-325-9521.

Wisdom from Catholic UPDATE

From “Preparing for Our Final Journey: Life is Changed, Not Ended”

The Catholic funeral is one of the Church’s greatest gifts. It celebrates the belief in resurrection and forgiveness. A funeral is an opportunity for those left behind to say goodbye. It can also be a way in which the deceased says goodbye to their loved ones. Talking about your funeral and making preparations may be a comfort for those who will mourn your passing. Everything you do to prepare for your death—the legal matters, the bequests you make, the provision for your survivors, and your funeral—all of these should be done with one concern in mind: building up the community of those left behind. Help them love each other after you are gone. This will be your greatest gift. Think about it: have you kept in mind the well-being of your loved ones after you die? Do your plans reflect your love for them? Try this exercise: write your own eulogy. Include all those virtues for which you would like to be remembered. Then, live it. Live your own eulogy.

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. Liguori.org • 800-325-9521.



Faithful God, bless parents who are trying to raise children to know you, and inspire leaders to find ways to assist families who are struggling. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

February 3–8

Monday, Weekday:

Heb 11:32–40 / Mk 5:1–20

Tuesday, Weekday:

Heb 12:1–4 / Mk 5:21–43

Wednesday, St. Agatha:

Heb 12:4–7, 11–15 / Mk 6:1–6

Thursday, St. Paul Miki and Companions:


Heb 12:18–19, 21–24 / Mk 6:7–13

Friday, Weekday:

Heb 13:1–8 / Mk 6:14–29

Saturday, Weekday:

Heb 13:15–17, 20–21 / Mk 6:30–34

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