

In obedience to the Old Testament law, Mary and Joseph presented Jesus in the temple forty days after his birth. As poor people they sacrificed 'a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons,' rather than a lamb. In its usual succinct way par. 529 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church says, 'The presentation of Jesus in the temple shows him to be the firstborn Son who belongs to the Lord. With Simeon and Anna, all Israel awaits its encounter with the Saviour ... Jesus is recognised as the long-expected Messiah, the "light to the nations" and the "glory of Israel", but also "a sign that is spoken against". The sword of sorrow predicted for Mary announces Christ's perfect and unique oblation on the cross that will impart the salvation God had "prepared in the presence of all peoples".'

Speaking about occasions like the presentation, some writers refer to them as divine appointments and power encounters. It was remarkable that both Simeon and Anna - two devout Jews who had been longing for the promised Messiah for many years - happened, in God's providence, not only to be present in the temple when Jesus was brought there by his parents, but, both of

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. / I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins / and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead / and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The priest introduces the Prayer of the Faithful.

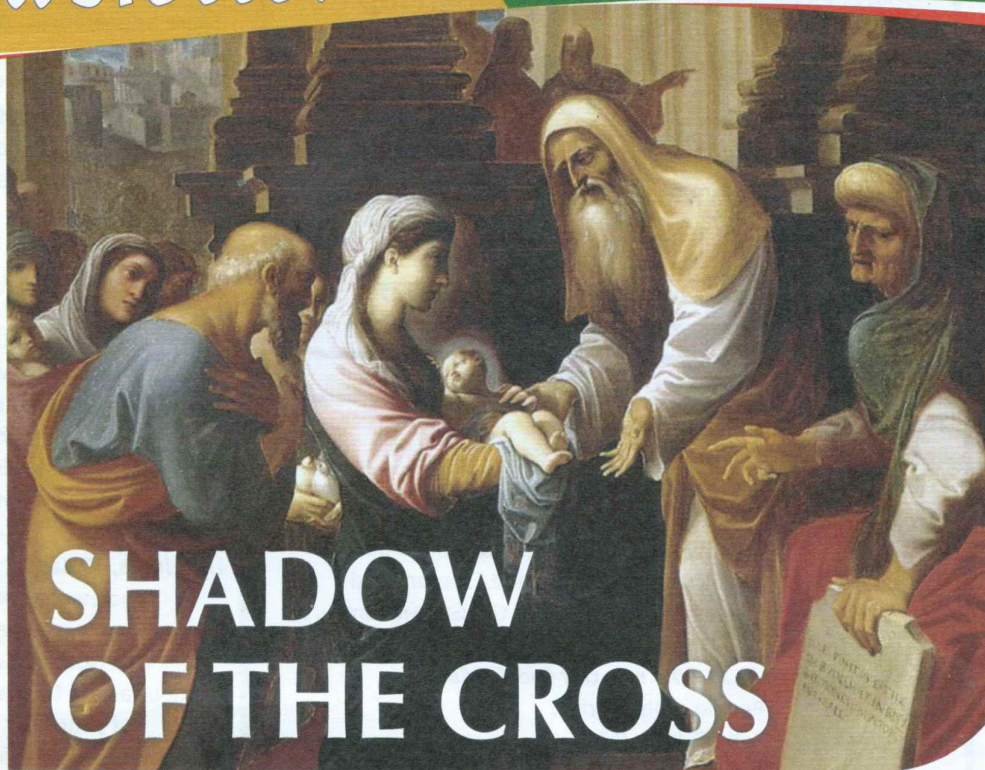
THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), ...

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

May the offering made with exultation by your Church be pleasing to you, O Lord, we pray, for you willed that your Only Begotten Son be



SHADOW OF THE CROSS

them were able to go beyond appearances to know, in a prophetic way, the secrets of the heart. Simeon said to Mary, "behold, this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against, and a sword will pierce through your own soul also, that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed." For her part, Anna, an elderly widow, offered prayers and praise to God for Jesus, and spoke to everyone present of his redemptive importance. Clearly, the shadow of the cross had already adumbrated this incident. Just as an oak tree is potentially present in an

offered to you for the life of the world as the Lamb without blemish. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you. And with your spirit. Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right and just.**

Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. ...

After the Consecration

The mystery of faith.

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

Behold the Lamb of God, ...

acorn, so the future life, death and resurrection of Jesus, the king of the beggars, were implicit in what the two prophets said about him.

When we were infants, our parents presented us to the Lord by bringing us to the church to be baptised. As adults we need to endorse that sense of dedication, while being willing, like Jesus, to renounce our own self-centred desires in order to remain faithful to the person and will of Jesus just as he remained obedient to the person and will of his Father.

— Pat Collins

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon (Lk 2:30-31)

My eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples.

Prayer after Communion

By these holy gifts which we have received, O Lord, bring your grace to perfection within us, and, as you fulfilled Simeon's expectation that he would not see death until he had been privileged to welcome the Christ, so may we, going forth to meet the Lord, obtain the gift of eternal life.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.