

ST. JAMES PARISH CHURCH
THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD
READINGS FOR FEBRUARY 1, 2026
THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

THE COLLECT:

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD

Almighty and everliving God, we humbly pray that, as your only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple, so we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts by Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. ***Amen.***

THE FIRST READING – MALACHI 3: 1 - 4

Malachi is a book of prophecy directed to the priests in the Temple. Priests have replaced kings as those closest to God on earth, but the priesthood is corrupt. The prophet speaks in God's name.

A Reading from the Word of God, written in the Book of Malachi, Chapter 3, beginning at the first verse.

Thus says the Lord, See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight-- indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the Lord in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.

The Word of the Lord

The people: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 84

This psalm is a song of the pilgrim's happiness as they come to worship in the house of the Lord.

1. How dear to me is your dwelling, O Lord of hosts! *
My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of

the Lord;

my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.

2. The sparrow has found her a house
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her
young; *
by the side of your altars, O Lord of hosts,
my King and my God.
3. Happy are they who dwell in your house! *
they will always be praising you.
4. Happy are the people whose strength is in you! *
whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.
5. Those who go through the desolate valley will find it
a place of springs, *
for the early rains have covered it with pools of
water.
6. They will climb from height to height, *
and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.
7. Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; *
hearken, O God of Jacob.
8. Behold our defender, O God; *
and look upon the face of your Anointed.
9. For one day in your courts is better than a thousand
in my own room, *
and to stand at the threshold of the house of my God
than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.
10. For the Lord God is both sun and shield; *
he will give grace and glory;

11. No good thing will the Lord withhold *
from those who walk with integrity.

12. O Lord of hosts, *
happy are they who put their trust in you!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son: *
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now: *
and shall be forever. **Amen.**

THE SECOND READING HEBREWS 2: 14-18

The author has written that it was appropriate that God, the creator, should – in bringing us to share in his glory – make Jesus (the forerunner of our salvation), a priest, but (unlike other priests) one who suffers. We and Jesus have the same Father.

A Reading from the Word of God, written in the Epistle of Hebrews, Chapter 2 beginning at the fourteenth verse.

Since God's children share flesh and blood, Jesus himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death. For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham.

Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

The Word of the Lord

The people: Thanks be to God.

THE GOSPEL – LUKE 2: 22 - 40

Jesus has been circumcised, as required by Jewish law. Now, some forty days after Jesus' birth, Mary brings him along, as she comes to the Temple to be purified after childbirth by a priest.

Gospeler: *The Lord be with you*

All: *And also with you*

Gospeler: *A Reading from the Holy Gospel
according to Luke.*

All: *Glory to Christ Our Saviour.*

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as

holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in
peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all
peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed-- and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived

with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

This is the Gospel of Christ

The people: Praise to Christ our Lord.

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