



St Paul's Church, Knightsbridge
The Diocese of London



The Family Mass
The Presentation of Christ in the Temple
Candlemas

30th January 2011 at 11 a.m.

Welcome to St Paul's Knightsbridge, part of the Diocese of London and a church of the worldwide Anglican Communion. If you are visiting us from another church, please make yourself known to the sidesmen or to one of the clergy after the service. Members of all Christian churches are welcome to share with us in this Eucharist – and those who do not wish to receive the Sacrament are invited to approach the altar at the time of Communion, to receive a blessing.



There is a loop system in the lower parts of the church for the benefit of the hearing-impaired. Hearing aid users should switch their devices to 'T'.

giftaid it

During the service a collection will be taken for the work of the church in this parish, throughout the Diocese of London and further afield. Please use the special envelopes at the end of each pew to maximise your giving through the 'Giftaid' scheme.



Members of the congregation are asked to ensure that mobile phones are switched off (or to silent) and are reminded that the taking of photographs or the making of audio or video recordings during services is prohibited.

*Cover image:
The Presentation
Rembrandt Van Rijn (1606-69)*

Order of Service

The Introductory Rite

At 11 o'clock a bell is rung; all stand and face the West End. As the candles are lit, the Choir sings:

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation; which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, to be a light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

*Music: Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625), The Short Service
Text: 'Nunc Dimittis'; Luke 2. 29-32*

The Celebrant says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord be with you
and with thy spirit.

Dear friends in Christ, forty days ago we celebrated with joy the feast of our Lord's nativity. Today we recall the day on which he was presented in the Temple, when he was offered to the Father and shown to his people. As a sign of his coming among us, his mother was purified, as we now come to him for cleansing. In their old age Simeon and Anna recognized him as their Lord, as we today sing of his glory. In this Eucharist, we celebrate both the joy of his coming and his searching judgement, looking back to the day of his birth and forward to the coming day of his passion.

THE BLESSING OF CANDLES

All hold up their candles for blessing. The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer with the words 'Let us pray', thereafter saying:

Lord God, the springing source of everlasting light, bless ✠ these candles and pour into the hearts of thy faithful people the brilliance of thine eternal splendour, that we, who by these kindled flames light up this temple to thy glory, may have the darkness of our souls dispelled, and so be counted worthy to stand before thee in that eternal temple where thou livest and reignest, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

THE ENTRANCE HYMN

**Hail to the Lord's anointed,
great David's greater son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
to set the captive free;
to take away transgression,
and rule in equity.**

**He shall come down like showers
upon the fruitful earth;
and love, joy, hope, like flowers,
spring in his path to birth;
before him, on the mountains,
shall peace the herald go;
and righteousness, in fountains,
from hill to valley flow.**

**O'er every foe victorious,
he on his throne shall rest;
from age to age more glorious,
all-blessing and all-blest:
the tide of time shall never
his covenant remove;
his name shall stand for ever;
that name to us is Love.**

*Words: James Montgomery; based on Psalm 72
Music: 'Crüger' from a chorale by J. Crüger (1598-1662)*

After the intonation of Gloria in excelsis Deo, all sit.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand
of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Music: Galloway Mass – James Macmillan (b.1959)

All stand when the sacred ministers stand.

THE COLLECT

The Celebrant introduces a period of silence:
Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God,
we humbly beseech thy majesty,
that, as thy only-begotten Son
was this day presented in the Temple in substance of our flesh,
so we may be presented unto thee with pure and clean hearts
by thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord,
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever
Amen.

All sit.

THE FIRST READING

The book of the prophet Malachi 3: 1-5

A reading from the book of the prophet Malachi

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. Then I will draw near to you for judgement; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.

At the end:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE PSALMODY

The Choir sings:

Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors : and the King of glory shall come in.

Who is the King of glory : it is the Lord strong and mighty, even the Lord mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors : and the King of glory shall come in.

Who is the King of glory : even the Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.

Psalm 24: 7-end.

THE SECOND READING

The Letter to the Hebrews 2: 14-18

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews.

Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he 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.

At the end:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

All stand.

THE GRADUAL HYMN

**Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.**

**Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.**

**Born thy people to deliver;
born a child and yet a king;
born to reign in us for ever;
now thy gracious kingdom bring.**

**By thy own eternal spirit,
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thy all-sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.**

Text: Charles Wesley (1717-1788)

Music: John Stainer (1840-1901)

All remain standing.

THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The Cantor sings:



Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

This child is the light to enlighten the nations,
and the glory of thy people Israel.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

All turn to face the Deacon.

THE GOSPEL READING

The Deacon says:

The Lord be with you

And with thy spirit.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, according to Luke.

Glory be to thee, O Lord.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they 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 favour of God was upon him.

Luke 2: 22-40

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to thee, O Christ.

THE SERMON

Fr Nick Mercer

Vicar General to the London College of Bishops

Silence is kept.

THE CREED

All stand. Let us make affirmation of our faith.

**I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
and of all things visible and invisible:
And in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of light,
very God of very God, begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost
of the Virgin Mary, and was made man,
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried,
and the third day he rose again
according to the Scriptures,
and ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.
And he shall come again with glory**

THE PEACE

The Celebrant says:

In the tender mercy of our God
the dayspring from on high has broken upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
and with thy spirit.

The Deacon says:

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All exchange a sign of peace with those standing close by.

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

THE OFFERTORY

The gifts of the people are carried to the altar and presented. A collection is taken to support our work, ministry and charitable giving.

Please use the Gift Aid envelopes provided, remembering to fill in all the details.

The altar is prepared and the gifts of bread and wine, the altar, and the sanctuary party are censed.

THE COLLECTION HYMN

**Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways!
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.**

**In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow thee.**

**O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with thee
The silence of eternity,
Interpreted by love!**

**Drop thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.**

**Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still small voice of calm!**

*Words: John Whittier (1807-92)
Music: C. H. H. Parry (1848-1918)*

The choir sings:

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

**When to the Temple Mary went
*Johannes Eccard (1553–1611)***

When to the Temple Mary went,
And brought the Holy Child,
Him did the aged Simeon see,
As it had been reveal'd.

He took up Jesus in his arms
And, blessing God, he said:

In peace I now depart,
My Saviour having seen,
The Hope of Israel,
the Light of Men.

Help now, Thy servants,
gracious Lord,
That we may ever be,
As once the faithful Simeon was,
Rejoicing but in Thee:
And when we must from Earth
departure take,
May gently fall asleep,
And with Thee wake.

Words: from the 17th century German, tr. John Troutbeck (1832-1899)

When the Thurifer approaches, all stand to be censed.

After being censed, all remain standing for the Eucharistic Prayer.

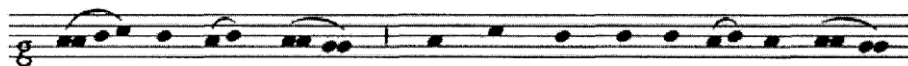
THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Celebrant sings:

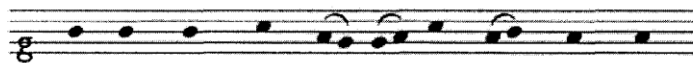
All respond:



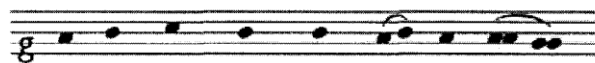
The Lord be with you *R.* and with thy spi-rit.



Lift up your hearts. *R.* **We lift them up un-to the Lord.**



Let us give thanks un - to the Lord our God.



R. **It is meet and right so to do.**

It is very meet, right and our bounden duty,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee,
O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God,
through Jesus Christ, thine only Son, our Lord.

For he is thy living Word;
through him thou hast created all things from the beginning,
and fashioned us in thine own image.

Through him thou didst redeem us from the slavery of sin,
giving him to be born of a woman,
to die upon the cross, and to rise again for us.

Through him thou hast made us a people for thine own possession,
exalting him to thy right hand on high,
and sending forth through him thy holy and life-giving Spirit.

And now we give thee thanks because, by appearing in the Temple, he
comes near to us in judgement; the Word made flesh searches the hearts of
all thy people and brings to light the brightness of thy splendour.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we laud and magnify thy glorious name,
evermore praising thee and saying:

The choir sings:

Holy, holy, holy Lord. God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Music: Galloway Mass – James Macmillan (b.1959)

The prayer continues:

Accept our praises, heavenly Father, through thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, and as we follow his example and obey his command, grant that by the power of thy Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be unto us his body and his blood; who, in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

Likewise after supper he took the cup;
and when he had given thanks to thee, he gave it to them, saying:

Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father,
we remember his offering of himself made once for all upon the cross;
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;
we look for the coming of his kingdom and with this bread and this cup
we make the memorial of Christ, thy Son, our Lord.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Accept through him, our great high priest, this our sacrifice of thanks and praise, and as we eat and drink these holy gifts in the presence of thy divine majesty, renew us by thy Holy Spirit, inspire us with thy love, and unite us in the body of thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,

by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be unto thee,
O Father almighty, world without end.

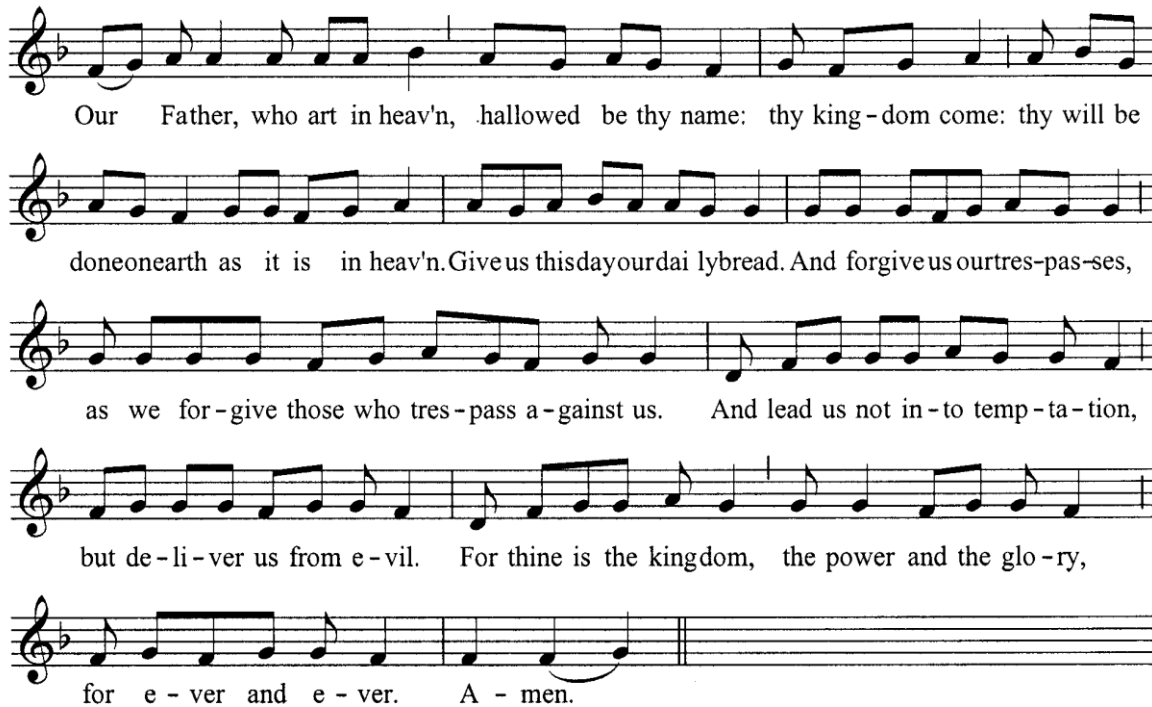
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

All kneel. The Celebrant sings:

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us.

All sing:



Our Father, who art in heav'n, hallowed be thy name: thy king - dom come: thy will be
done on earth as it is in heav'n. Give us this day our dai ly bread. And forgive us our tres - pas - ses,
as we for - give those who tres - pass a - gainst us. And lead us not in - to temp - ta - tion,
but de - li - ver us from e - vil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glo - ry,
for e - ver and e - ver. A - men.

THE FRACTION

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread, saying:

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

**Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

THE GIVING OF HOLY COMMUNION

By way of invitation to receive the Sacrament the Celebrant says:

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Blessed are those who are called to his supper.

**Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof,
but speak the word only and my soul shall be healed.**

*The Sacred Ministers and Servers receive the Holy Communion, followed by the people, beginning with those seated at the front of the Nave.
All who normally do so in their own Church are invited to receive the Sacrament.
Those who do not wish to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion are invited to approach the altar to receive a blessing, carrying this booklet in their hands as an indication to the Priest.*

The choir sings:

AGNUS DEI

*Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us your peace.*

Music: Galloway Mass – James Macmillan (b.1959)

COMMUNION ANTHEM

Hodie beata Virgo

Peters Philips (1561–1628)

Hodie beata Virgo Maria Puerum Jesum praesentavit in templo et Simeon, repletus Spiritu Sancto, accepit eum in ulnas suas, et benedixit Deum, et dixit: Nunc dimittis servum tuum in pace.

Today the Blessed Virgin Mary presented the child Jesus in the Temple; and Simeon, full of the Holy Spirit, took Him in his arms, and blessed God, and said: Now dismiss your servant depart in peace.

Text: antiphon for second Vespers on the Feast of the Presentation

PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

The Celebrant introduces a period of silent prayer.

*Let us pray.
All kneel.*

*Lord, who didst fulfil the hope of Simeon and Anna that they might live to greet the coming of the Messiah: grant that we, who have received these inexpressible gifts, may be prepared to meet Christ Jesus when he shall come to bring us to eternal life; for he reigneth, now and for ever. **Amen.***

Almighty God,
we thank thee for feeding us
with the body and blood of thy Son, Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer thee our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of thy Spirit
to live and work to thy praise and glory. Amen.

All stand.

THE CONCLUDING HYMN (391)

King of glory, King of peace,
I will love thee;
and that love may never cease,
I will move thee.
Thou hast granted my request,
thou hast heard me;
thou didst note my working breast,
thou hast spared me.

Wherefore with my utmost art
I will sing thee,
and the cream of all my heart
I will bring thee.
Though my sins against me cried,
thou didst clear me;
and alone, when they replied,
thou didst hear me.

Seven whole days, not one in seven,
I will praise thee;
in my heart, though not in heaven,
I can raise thee.
Small it is, in this poor sort
to enroll thee:
e'en eternity's too short
to extol thee.

*Words: George Herbert (1593-1632)
Music: Gwalchmai, John David Jones (1827-70)*

All remain standing.

THE BLESSING & THE DISMISSAL

The Celebrant says:

The Lord be with you
and with thy spirit.

Christ, the Son of God, born of Mary,
fill you with his grace to trust his promises and obey his will;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

The Deacon says:

Go in the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

All remain standing as the Servers and Sacred Ministers depart.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Toccata (*from Symphonie V*)
Charles Marie Widor (1844-1937)

NOTES ON THE READINGS

Malachi 3:1-4

Cyrus, King of Persia, has permitted the people of Israel to return to Palestine. The Temple, gutted in 586 BC, has been restored, but Israel is still a Persian province. People expected that their fidelity to God would be rewarded by (material) prosperity, but life has continued to be hard, so after several decades, they have lapsed into waywardness. It is the ungodly who prosper. In the old days, the king was God's agent, but now (there being no king), the priests have assumed this role. In previous chapters, the prophet has condemned the priests for despising God, corrupting worship and misleading the people.

A "messenger" (v. 1) or angel, God's agent, will come to prepare a way for him. God, long expected, will come to "his temple", to the priests. God's "covenant" with Israel was summed up in the priests. His arrival will be sudden, unannounced. V. 2 implies that when God comes, he will judge the people. (The accused stands to hear judgement.) A refiner used the heat of a fire to separate ore into pure metal and slag; a fuller cared for newly shorn wool or woven garments by cleaning them, purifying them, with lye. The messenger will "purify ... and refine", (v. 3) the priests ("the descendants of Levi") until they hold him in proper respect. Their offerings, on behalf of the people, will then again be "pleasing to the Lord" (v. 4). God will judge adversely those who deviate from proper moral behaviour and from his ways (v. 5). 4:5 tells us that the messenger is Elijah; hence the popular belief in Jesus' day that Elijah would return.

Psalm 24:7-10

This psalm is based on a Canaanite myth which tells of the divine conquest of the unruly forces of chaos. It has transformed into a hymn of praise to God, the victorious creator, followed by a liturgy on entering the Temple. In question-and-answer form, it was probably sung antiphonally, as the Ark was borne to the Temple. Vv. 1-2 acknowledge God as creator. V. 3 asks: who will be admitted to the Temple? Vv. 4-6 give the answer: those who are pure, do not worship false gods, and do not harm others with false oaths. They will be blessed by God, with prosperity. In vv. 7-10, the pilgrims identify God in terms traditionally associated with the Ark: he is "King of glory", the "Lord of hosts" (v. 10), the war hero of Israel (v. 8b). The "doors" (v. 7) are those between the outer court and the sanctuary of the Temple, the "heads" (v. 9) their lintels. Perhaps a priest asks: "Who is this king of the glory?" (v. 10) from within, and the people answer from the court. God dwells in the sanctuary.

Hebrews 2:14-18

Hebrews couches the good news in Jewish terms: it sees Jesus as the great high priest. V. 10 says something like 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) a priest who suffers. Why? V. 11 says: because Jesus

and we have the same Father. God reveals himself in the Church. There is a close affinity between Jesus and his followers.

In v. 14, “flesh” refers to human nature, considered in its weakness and infidelity. The writer sees the devil as having the power of death – perhaps a reminder of the link between sin and death portrayed in the story of the Garden of Eden. Jesus, through his redemptive act, frees us from the fear of death – death is no longer separation from God. Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, the nature of death has changed: it has become the way out of the domain of sin. The “descendants of Abraham” (v. 16) are those who believe in Christ. Old Testament priests were expected to be “faithful” (v. 17), but Christ, the “high priest” is unique in being “merciful”, compassionate. Before Christ, when one deviated from God's ways (sinned), God became angry and separated one from him, one offered a sacrifice (thus obtaining purification), and regained a right relationship with God. Christ's “sacrifice”, death, ends this cycle: he continually takes sins on himself, keeping us in unity with God. Then v. 18: it is because Christ was “tested” in life and when dying that he is able to help those who are tempted to abandon his ways.

Luke 2:22-40

Jesus has been circumcised, marking him as a member of God's chosen people, Israel, through whom world salvation was to be achieved. After childbirth, it was 40 days before a mother could be purified before a priest in the Temple, so it is at least that long since Jesus' birth. She was expected to offer a lamb, along with a turtledove or a pigeon; if she were poor (as Mary is), two turtledoves or pigeons sufficed. Exodus required that every firstborn boy be consecrated to God. Jesus' presentation in the Temple is like Samuel's. Jesus and his family fulfil the requirements of Mosaic law.

Simeon looks forward to the coming of the Messiah to restore Israel to favour with God (“the consolation of Israel”, v. 25). The Spirit has told him that he will see the Christ before he dies (v. 26). Simeon's words in vv. 29-32 are known as the *Nunc Dimittis*, from the first words in Latin. He begins by saying that God is setting him free, as a slave is granted liberty. He is now free to die (for the Spirit's revelation to him is now fulfilled), and Israel is free of bondage. God has saved Israel, as he promised to “all peoples”; his salvation is for Gentiles too. In v. 33, Joseph is Jesus' legal father. Simeon prophesies in vv. 34-35 through the Spirit (v. 25). Jesus is destined for the death and resurrection (“the falling and the rising”, v. 34) of many; he will meet opposition, and will cause many to think deeply about him. Mary too will need to decide for or against Christ (“own soul”, v. 35). Simeon and Anna together stand before God; to Luke, men and women are equal in God's eyes. Anna praises God, and tells many the meaning of Jesus, as Simeon has prophesied. Like Samuel, “the favour of God was upon him” (v. 40).

THE CHOIR OF ST PAUL'S KNIGHTSBRIDGE

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Stephen Farr

ASSITANT DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Christian Wilson

The Music & Musicians of St Paul's Knightsbridge

St Paul's Knightsbridge maintains a regular professional choir of eight and the services of both a Director (Stephen Farr) and Assistant Director of Music (Christian Wilson). The organ is by Henry Willis & Sons and dates from 1888. The musical repertoire, Sunday by Sunday, is diverse and often boldly ambitious: at the Solemn Mass at 11 am there is always a choral mass setting and two seasonal anthems, one at the Offertory and the other during Communion. Full details of the music for each week – along with a programme note – is published in the service paper. The musicians also sing and play for weddings, baptisms, funerals and memorial services at the church.

St Paul's Knightsbridge is grateful to The Berkeley Hotel for its generous and neighbourly support of the music.

THE BERKELEY

KNIGHTSBRIDGE LONDON

NOTES ON THE MUSIC

Nunc dimittis – Orlando Gibbons (1585-1625)

Orlando Gibbons came from a family which include rather more than its fair share of accomplished musicians. Orlando was born in Cambridge and admitted to the choir of King's College in February 1596. Coincidentally, Edward Gibbons, one of his elder brothers, was master of the choristers at that time. The life of any chorister comes to an abrupt end upon the breaking of his voice, however, Orlando being gifted soon found success as a composer for the Church and it was not long before he found himself in London as the Organist of the Chapel Royal. His compositional output was considerable and includes various liturgical pieces, anthems, verse anthems, wonderful hymn tunes with their characteristic double length notes at the start of phrases, madrigals, pieces for the virginal (an early keyboard instrument for which one did not use the thumbs to play) and two collections of rather pleasing Fancies for Viols.

The Short Service by Gibbons has lasted the test of time by being continued to be sung in cathedrals up and down the country for the past centuries. The Nunc Dimittis is a beautiful piece of composition in miniature. Its expressive vocal lines and use of imitation between the voices combine to provide a very uncluttered work.

The Galloway Mass - James Macmillan (b.1959)

James Macmillan is a prolific Scottish composer of classical music. His compositional style has greatly changed over the years as he has matured. His music not only takes influences from his deep Roman Catholic faith and spirituality, but also from folk idioms of his native land and those from further afield. Over the past year, Macmillan has been involved in debate surrounding the Catholic faith in Scotland, some of which has been quite fierce in the press. The Galloway Mass was written in 1996 for Westminster Cathedral. It is set in a simply harmonic style and can be performed congregationally with a cantor.

When to the Temple – Johann Eccard – (1553-1611)

Johann Eccard, like all good German composers, was a kappelmeister, having charge of the music performed in church. He travelled to various parts of Germany, but is also reputed to have ended up in Paris at one stage in his life. His studies with Orlando di Lasso in Munich evidently paid off as his opus list is considerable. He worked almost exclusively with Church-song and his settings of well known chorale melodies and his own original compositions are the reason he stands out amongst the plethora of his contemporaries. *When to the temple Mary went* is a fine piece of part writing which makes good use of cadences, arriving at them by way of some interesting harmonic sequences. The words, thankfully sung in English for us today, tell of the events concerning Mary and Simeon when Our Lord was presented to the Temple in Jerusalem.

Hodie Beata Virgo - Peter Philips (c1560-1628)

Peter Philips was a highly prolific English composer. He lived his adult life in continental Europe as he was born a catholic and felt the need, understandably, to leave England for fear of religious persecution. It would appear his early training came as a chorister at St Paul's Cathedral and keyboard lessons from the more renowned William Byrd, whom Philips only seconds as the most published composer at the time. *Hodie Beata Virgo*, in typical 16th Century style, again tells of that significant occasion when Simeon rejoices and pronounces that the infant Jesus is indeed the Christ child.

Toccata from Symphonie No. 5 in F – Charles Marie Widor (1844-1937)

It seems unusual to assign the term "symphony" to a work written for one instrument. However, Widor was at the forefront of a revival in French organ music, which had sunk to its nadir during the early nineteenth century. A prime mover in this revival was Aristide Cavaillé-Coll, who pioneered a new organ that was "symphonic" in style. The organ of the Baroque and Classical periods was designed to project a clear and crisp sound capable of handling contrapuntal writing. Cavaillé-Coll's organs had a much warmer sound, ideal for the homophonic style of writing that now predominated, and a vast array of stops that extended the timbre of the instrument. This new style of organ, with a truly orchestral range of voicing and unprecedented abilities for smooth crescendos and diminuendos, encouraged composers to write music that was truly symphonic in scope. This trend was not limited to France, and was reflected in Germany by the

organs built by Eberhard Friedrich Walcker and the works of Franz Liszt, Julius Reubke, and Max Reger.

Widor's best-known single piece for the organ is the final movement, Toccata, from his Symphony for Organ No. 5, which is often played as a recessional at wedding ceremonies and even at the close of the Christmas Midnight Mass at Saint Peter's Basilica (The Vatican City, Rome). Although the Fourth Symphony also opens with a Toccata, it is in a dramatically different (and earlier) style. The Toccata from Symphony No. 5 is the first of the toccatas characteristic of French Romantic organ music, and served as a model for later works by Boëllmann, Mulet, and Dupré. Widor was pleased with the worldwide renown this single piece afforded him, but he was unhappy with how fast many other organists played it. Widor himself always played the Toccata rather deliberately. Many organists play it at a very fast tempo whereas Widor preferred a more controlled articulation to be involved. He recorded the piece, at St. Sulpice in his eighty-ninth year: the tempo used for the Toccata is quite slow.

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