

DECEMBER 27, 2020
FIRST SUNDAY
AFTER CHRISTMAS



The sight of baby Jesus brings peace.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 2:22-40	Jesus presented in the temple
Monday	Isaiah 61:10—62:3	Rejoice in the Lord
Tuesday	Galatians 4:4-7	Adoption as God's children
Wednesday	Jude 1-2	A prayer for blessing
Thursday	Ecclesiastes 3:1-13	A time for everything
Friday	Psalms 8	Divine majesty and human dignity
Saturday	Psalms 148	All creation praises God
Sunday	John 1:1-18	The Word became flesh

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation." Luke 2:29-30 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of peace, give us faith to walk in peace each day and to trust your eternal care for us and for all the world through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Praise the Lord, all you people; for our Savior Jesus and for this gift of food, praise the Lord. (Psalm 148:1)

A Blessing to Give:

May Jesus, the light of the world, give you peace.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

Away in a Manger



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- When something painful happens, where do you look for hope?
- What does it mean to you to be a person of peace?
- How does the message of the birth of Jesus bring you hope and peace?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 2:22-40.

Luke 2:29-32 is known as the *Nunc Dimittis* (Latin for, "Now release," the first words of Simeon's song of praise in the Latin Bible) used in worship and also tender words offered at the deathbed of a loved one. Simeon's song makes it clear that in Jesus, God has acted in a way that now gives peace for all people, including Gentiles, the non-Jews of the world. Luke makes it clear that the promise given to the Jewish people to be a blessing to the world has now come to pass through the birth of Jesus. Barriers are broken down. Jews and Gentiles together have hope. Mary and Joseph who can only offer two turtledoves (often a gift given by the poor) as a sacrifice for Jesus' birth, have actually given the world its real hope and peace. It brings the joy expressed in Psalm 148, but it also brings the pain that will pierce Mary's soul. Compassion is like that. It feels the pain of others and trusts that God's saving work is the light, hope, and peace of the world. How has love brought you pain and peace at the same time?

Pray: **Loving God, we thank you for Simeon, Anna, and all those throughout history who have lifted up Jesus as the hope and peace for all the world. Amen.**

SERVICE

In the temple in Jerusalem, Simeon and Anna encouraged and blessed two young, first-time parents, Mary and Joseph. Identify parents with young children in your congregation or community. Is there an act of service you can do on their behalf (e.g., help with cleaning, bringing a meal, or childcare) so they can enjoy some time out together?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Psalm 148 is a psalm that offers praise to God in all things. Praise means to give thanks. Write your own psalm. Make a list of things for which you wish to praise God. Using the list, say each praise aloud. For example:

I praise God for earth and all stars. Praise the Lord!

I praise God for family and friends. Praise the Lord!

And so forth until you finish the list.

