

CANDLEMAS ASSEMBLY JESUS LIGHT OF THE WORLD

PURPOSE

- to explore the important part that Candlemas plays in the Church year
- to investigate the actions and decisions of Jesus parents Simeon and Anna and their meaning for the future of Jesus as he grows up.

RESOURCES

- nativity scene packed away
- t- lights to light as it is packed away
- story from Mary's point of view below
- Simeon and Anna's waiting
- prayer

Source Roots on the web material

ACTIVITIES

- packing away the crib scene leaving the babe and his parent .Light a t light as each leaves .Place around the baby Jesus to show light growing
- the story from Mary's point of view
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Through Mary's eyes

When I look at my baby. that's what I see - my baby! It sounds obvious, really. I play at blowing on his tummy to make him laugh, and I count his toes, and kiss along the side of his face while he squirms happily and gathers fistfuls of my hair in his fat fingers. Every moment is a joy.

When I look at my baby I see the most special baby in the world. And the women in the village, they say 'O, every mother thinks her baby is the most special child ever born'; but they don't know what I do. They weren't there when Gabriel came, or when Jesus was born and there were shepherds and wise men, dreams and dangers on every side. They weren't there at the temple.

We went to the temple to present the child to the priests, according to the law. That bit was easy - he was born in Bethlehem which is only a few miles from Jerusalem and the temple. As if it were planned. We took the birds to sacrifice, and all around us all the business, and the busyness of the temple is going on.

People of all ages making offerings, bringing their prayers, waiting and talking in the shade; priests looking important, or hot, or harried. One of the oldest men came up to us. His name was Simeon and he looked at my baby. He was smiling at first, then he went very still, and reached out with a hand that shook, with age perhaps, I thought at first.

Then he took the baby from me, and I was worried that he might drop him; but Jesus just lay there and looked up at him; the young eyes and the old gazing at each other. Then the old man began to speak; said that now he could die in peace, because he had seen the salvation God promised to all peoples, for the glory of Israel.

How on earth could he know? What did he see? It was extraordinary. He seemed to think that his whole life had been fulfilled by seeing my baby. As if Jesus was as much his as mine, but this is my baby we're talking about!

Then he blessed us, spoke about the future as if he knew, said one day Jesus would show up how people really thought, and that would make some people turn against him. Then he added. 'and a sword shall pierce your own soul, too'. I hadn't actually been afraid till then. I'd thought about

birth, and childhood, and hope, and doing what God wanted, not about pain, or fear. But I can still see him, in my mind, standing there, looking at me with such pity.

It's still there, that feeling, the knowledge that somewhere, someday, grief and loss are waiting for me, and I can't change any of it, I can only love him, the most special baby in the world, and make sure that for now, every moment is a joy.

- Why was Simeon important to the story

Proper Jews were supposed to take their first son to the temple and make an offering of birds, so that's what Jesus' parents did, a little while after he was born.

While they were there they met an old man called Simeon, who held Jesus and prayed over him. God had told Simeon that he would live to see the Messiah, and Simeon knew right away that this was the child he's been waiting for and a very old woman called Anna got so excited that she told all the people around about the baby.

Mary and Joseph went home again, and the baby grew up safe and well.

- PRAYERS

The button is a symbol here of the hopes and fears we bring before God which we place into his hand

when we need some help to believe that we are liked and loved;

- THANK YOU FOR THE LIGHT OF JESUS
when we are afraid of being left out;

- THANK YOU FOR THE LIGHT OF JESUS

when we need to hold it together and not lose our tempers;

- THANK YOU FOR THE LIGHT OF JESUS
when friendships need repairing;

- THANK YOU FOR THE LIGHT OF JESUS
when people we love are arguing;

- THANK YOU FOR THE LIGHT OF JESUS