



Crucis



The Magazine of St Salvador's Scottish Episcopal Church

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Far be it from me to glory except in the cross of Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.

February 2025

Galatians 6:14

Editorial

Candlemas is one celebration in the church that has been given *three* different titles. Obviously it is the service at which we light candles and walk in procession with them. The candles represent the Light of the World, describing Jesus Christ. This is the time we celebrate the presentation of the baby Jesus in the Temple. Therefore *The Presentation of the Lord*, is the second title of this service, commemorating the first time Jesus was brought officially into the presence of God when a sacrifice was made in thanksgiving for His birth. Simeon and Anna, who met the family there, recognised Jesus' significance, and Simeon's beautiful hymn of praise, known as the *Nunc Dimittis*, is now used regularly at Evening Prayer.

As well as giving thanks for the birth of Jesus, Mary had to perform a special rite of purification according to Jewish law and custom, hence the third title: *The Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary*. A number of Jewish religious rituals (and Christian ones too) may have had their origin in the need for basic hygiene and cleanliness, and it would therefore be logical that childbirth be included. For many years, the Christian church reflected this purification ritual in the rite of the 'Churching of Women', performed at the woman's return to the church after a period of postpartum confinement. This rite changed into the 'Thanksgiving after the Birth of a Child' or a 'Blessing of a Woman after Childbirth' in recent years to help counter the wrong thinking that a woman after childbirth was somehow spiritually impure. That is not the case (especially not for Mary) and it should be emphasised that this is a time instead for gratitude and thanksgiving.

We are grateful and thankful to God at this time for presenting us with his only Son, Jesus, who would, in only 33 years, change the whole world out of all recognition.

PURIFICATION B.V.M



Think for one moment what the world would look like if it had not been for Jesus. His teachings have influenced peoples and civilisations both explicitly and subtly for over two millennia. Some might cynically suggest that we would not have had religious wars, but religions have always been with us, and we have always had wars. Why blame Jesus for our stupidity and disobedience, when he taught that we should love and pray for our enemies?

May we all give thanks for the true nature of the great gift of the incarnation of the Son of God, and humbly open ourselves to His teachings.

Martin Andrews (Churchwarden)

Prayer for the Presentation of the Lord

O Lord Jesus Christ, who as a child wast presented in the temple and received with joy by Simeon and Anna as the Redeemer of Israel: Mercifully grant that we, like them, may be guided by the Holy Spirit to acknowledge and love thee unto our lives' end; who with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, livest and reignest God, world without end.

Church of South India

Services in February

Sun 2	Candlemas	Sung Mass 11.00 a.m.
Wed 5	Martyrs of Japan (ant)	Lay-led 10.00 a.m.
Sun 9	Epiphany V	Lay-Led 11.00 a.m.
Wed 12	St Scholastica (tr)	Lay-led 10.00 a.m.
Sun 16	Epiphany VI	Lay-led 11.00 a.m.
Wed 19	Martin Luther	Low Mass 10.00 a.m.
Sun 23	Epiphany VII	Sung Mass 11.00 a.m.
Wed 26	St Polycarp (tr)	Lay-led 10.00 a.m.

Saints' and Special Days for February



Sun., 2nd Feb. – Presentation of the Lord (Candlemas)

This day marks the completion of forty days since the birth of Jesus, when Mary and Joseph took the Infant to the Temple in Jerusalem to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving for the firstborn son and to meet the requirements of the Law for Mary's purification after childbirth. The Holy Child is acclaimed by Simeon as 'the light to lighten the Gentiles'. The image of Christ as the Light has led to the celebration of light countering darkness, with candles often taking a central place in the observance of this festival.



Thu., 6th Feb. – St Paul Miki & Martyrs of Japan

Almost fifty years after St Francis Xavier had arrived in Japan as its first Christian apostle, the presence of several thousand baptised Christians in the land became a subject of suspicion to its ruler, Hideyoshi. He initiated a persecution that continued for over thirty-five years, beginning with twenty-six men and women, including ordained, religious and lay people, and consisting of Europeans, Japanese and a Korean.

They were first mutilated then crucified at Nagasaki in 1597. Among these first Japanese martyrs was a young Japanese Jesuit priest, Paul Miki.

Monday, 10th Feb. – St Scholastica, Religious

Born at Nursia in Umbria in the late fifth century, the sister of St Benedict, Scholastica consecrated herself to God in early childhood. She lived near her brother's monastery at Monte Cassino, meeting him annually at a nearby house to praise God together and to discuss spiritual matters. She died in about the year 543.

Wed., 19th Feb. – Martin Luther, Pr. & Reformer

Martin Luther was born in 1483 at Eisleben in Saxony and educated at the cathedral school in Magdeburg and the university in Erfurt. He joined the Augustinians there and was ordained priest in 1507, becoming a lecturer in the university at Wittenburg. He became vicar of his order in 1515, having charge of a dozen monasteries. His Christian faith began to take on a new shape after he became convinced that the gospels taught that humanity is saved by faith and not by works, finding support in the writings of St Augustine of Hippo. He refuted the teaching of the scriptural Letter of James, calling it 'an epistle of straw'. Luther sought to debate the whole matter by posting ninety-five theses or propositions on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenburg in the year 1517. The hierarchy chose to see it as a direct attack on the Church, which forced Luther into open rebellion. The Protestant Reformation spread throughout Germany and then Europe, while the Catholic Church itself undertook long-advocated reform in response. Luther died in 1546, having effected a renaissance in the Church, both Protestant and Catholic.

Sun., 23rd Feb. – St Polycarp of Smyrna, Bp & M.

A disciple of the Apostle John, Polycarp had been Bishop of Smyrna on the Aegean coast of Asia Minor for over forty years when the persecution of Christians began. In the year 155 he was arrested and, having refused the opportunity to renounce his faith, was burnt at the stake. His remains were gathered together and buried outside the city. Soon after, the practice began of celebrating the Eucharist over his burial place on the anniversary of his death, a practice which also grew over the martyrs' tombs in Rome, a significant early development in the evolution of the Church's sanctoral calendar and devotions.

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