



LIVING IN THE LIGHT

## The Word

### **The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph**

*Week of December 31*

#### ***Call to Prayer and Sharing***

- ✦ *Leader invites all into a few moments of silent reflection to remember that we are in the presence of God. (reflective pause)*
- ✦ *Then: "In the name of the Father and of the Son . . . ."*

#### ***The Word of God***

- ✦ *Leader reads part or all of one of the scripture texts from the previous Sunday.*

Luke 2:22-40

When the days were completed for their purification according to the law of Moses,  
They took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord,  
just as it is written in the law of the Lord,  
Every male that opens the womb shall be consecrated to the Lord,  
and to offer the sacrifice of a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,  
in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon.  
This man was righteous and devout, awaiting the consolation of Israel,  
and the Holy Spirit was upon him.  
It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death  
before he had seen the Christ of the Lord.  
He came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus  
to perform the custom of the law in regard to him,  
He took him into his arms and blessed God, saying:  
"Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word,  
for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in sight of all the peoples,  
a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel."  
The child's father and mother were amazed at what was said about him;  
and Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother,  
"Behold, this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel,  
and to be a sign that will be contradicted—and you yourself a sword will pierce—  
so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."  
There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.  
She was advanced in years, having lived seven years with her husband after her marriage,  
and then as a widow until she was eighty-four.  
She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day with fasting and prayer.  
And coming forward at that very time, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child  
to all who were awaiting the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of 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.

### ***Faith Sharing***

- ✦ *Leader reminds everyone of the Question of the Week which relates to the particular group gathered . . . .*

**Children:** Who helps you grow strong? Who shares wisdom with you?

**Teens:** Why do you think Mary was able to remain faithful and accept God's will, even though she knew it would be painful at times?

**Adults:** In what areas of your life has Jesus created tension or even division?

We offer this form of contemplative sharing for pondering Scripture while considering the question, and for the faith sharing which follows.

- Listen/ Read (Lectio): Ponder God's word and listen for what touches your heart.
- Meditate (Meditatio): Notice what you notice. Allow God's word to resonate in you.
- Speak/Share (Oratio): Prayerfully share with the group your thoughts and feelings.
- Rest in God's presence (Contemplatio): Notice God's presence and be still, surrounded by God's love.

*Time is provided for sharing responses to the question. Silence between responses is to be expected. Allow about 15 minutes for faith sharing. For larger groups, leader invites members to divide into groups of three or four for faith sharing.*

- ✦ *When the sharing comes to an end, the leader invites everyone to take a moment to silently and reverently hold what has been shared together.*
- ✦ *Continue with the meeting, turning to the agenda.*

### ***Concluding the meeting***

*At the end of the meeting, the leader closes with the following prayer:*

Good and Gracious God,  
your love for us surpasses all understanding.  
As we leave here today,  
be with us in all our comings and goings,  
and in all that we say and do.  
We pray this in the name of Christ Jesus who is our Light.  
Amen.