



Liturgical Notes for The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

Sunday, February 2

The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord falls on a Sunday of Ordinary Time this year, and according to the [Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the General Roman Calendar](#), The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord supersedes the Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, and it is celebrated beginning with the Vigil Mass on Saturday afternoon and through all the Sunday Masses. In response to a number of inquiries, the Office of Divine Worship offers these helpful suggestions:

Background

This feast celebrates the fortieth day after Christmas. The feast was first observed in the Eastern Church as "The Encounter." In the sixth century, it began to be observed in the West: in Rome with a more penitential character and in Gaul (France) with solemn blessings and processions of candles, popularly known as "Candlemas." In the middle ages, the feast became associated by farmers with predictions about the weather (if the sun shone on Candlemas and cast a shadow, then winter would continue; if it was cloudy and there was no shadow cast by the sun, then spring would come soon).

Liturgical Options

The entrance rite today is similar to the entrance rite for Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, except that on this feast members of the community carry candles instead of palms.

The *Roman Missal* provides for a full procession, with the congregation and the ministers first gathering in a separate place before processing into the church. There is also the option given of a "Solemn Entrance". If the solemn entrance is used instead, the assembly gathers in the church as usual. The celebrant greets the congregation and blesses the candles from the entrance of the church and then processes with the ministers to the altar, while all hold their lighted candles.

A song is sung at the very beginning of the liturgy, while the candles of the people are lit and while the ministers take their places either in a place apart from the church or at the church entrance. The antiphon provided in the Missal expresses our faith that God brings "light to the eyes of those who serve him well."

The same or another song may be used to accompany the procession of the congregation and/or the ministers into the church. The *Roman Missal* contains an entrance antiphon that speaks of "a light for revelation to the Gentiles," along with verses drawn from the Canticle of Simeon, which we hear proclaimed in today's Gospel. In addition to the metrical versions (hymn) of the Canticle, below you will find the ICEL Music and Accompaniment, which is based on the ancient chant for the feast.

First Form: The Procession

1. At an appropriate hour, a gathering takes place at a smaller church or other suitable place other than inside the church to which the procession will go. The faithful hold in their hands unlighted candles.
2. The Priest, wearing white vestments as for Mass, approaches with the ministers. Instead of the chasuble, the Priest may wear a cope, which he leaves aside after the procession is over.
3. While the candles are being lit, the following antiphon or another appropriate chant is sung.

*Behold, our Lord will come with power,
to enlighten the eyes of his servants, alleluia.*

4. When the chant is concluded, the Priest, facing the people, says: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Then the Priest greets the people in the usual way, and next he gives the introductory address, encouraging the faithful to celebrate the rite of this feast day actively and consciously. He may use these or similar words:

Dear brethren (brothers and sisters),
forty days have passed since we celebrated the joyful feast
of the Nativity of the Lord.
Today is the blessed day
when Jesus was presented in the Temple by Mary and Joseph.
Outwardly he was fulfilling the Law,
but in reality he was coming to meet his believing people.
Prompted by the Holy Spirit,
Simeon and Anna came to the Temple.
Enlightened by the same Spirit,
they recognized the Lord
and confessed him with exultation.
So let us also, gathered together by the Holy Spirit,
proceed to the house of God to encounter Christ.
There we shall find him
and recognize him in the breaking of the bread,
until he comes again, revealed in glory.

5. After the address the Priest blesses the candles, saying, with hands extended:

Let us Pray.
O God, source and origin of all light,
who on this day showed to the just man Simeon
the Light for revelation to the Gentiles,
we humbly ask that,
in answer to your people's prayers,
you may be pleased to sanctify with your blessing + these candles,
which we are eager to carry in praise of your name,
so that, treading the path of virtue,
we may reach that light which never fails.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Or:

O God, true light, who create light eternal,
spreading it far and wide,
pour, we pray, into the hearts of the faithful
the brilliance of perpetual light,
so that all who are brightened in your holy temple
by the splendor of these candles
may happily reach the light of your glory.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

He sprinkles the candles with holy water without saying anything, and puts incense into the thurible for the procession.

6. Then the priest receives from the Deacon or a minister the lighted candle prepared for him and the procession begins, with the Deacon announcing (or, if there is no Deacon, the Priest himself):

Let us go in Peace to meet the Lord.

Or: Let us go forth in peace.

In this case, all respond:

In the name of Christ. Amen.

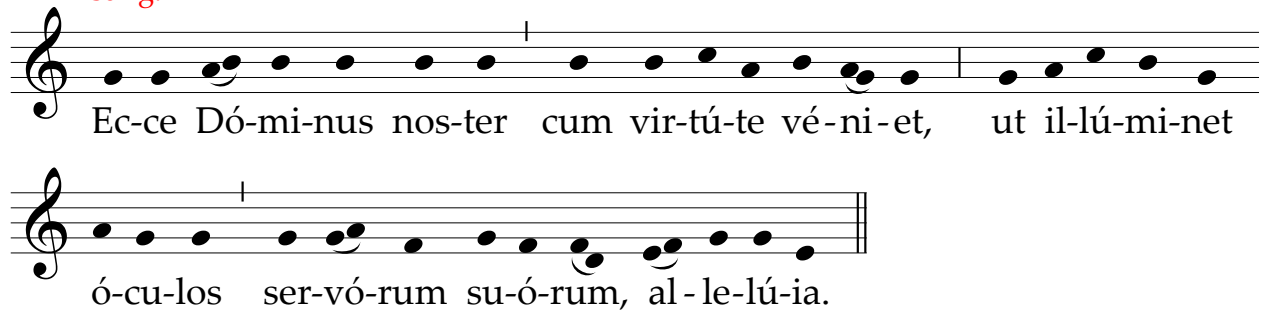
7. All carry lighted candles. As the procession moves forward, one or other of the antiphons that follow is sung, namely the antiphon *A light for revelation with the canticle (Lk 2: 29-32), or the antiphon Sion, adorn your bridal chamber or another appropriate chant.*
8. As the procession enters the church, the Entrance Antiphon of the Mass is sung. When the Priest has arrived at the altar, he venerates it and, if appropriate, incenses it. Then he goes to the chair, where he takes off the cope, if he used it in the procession, and puts on a chasuble. After the singing of the hymn *Gloria in excelsis (Glory to God in the highest), he says the Collect as usual. The Mass continues in the usual manner.*

Second Form: The Solemn Entrance

9. Whenever a procession cannot take place, the faithful gather in church, holding candles in their hands. The Priest, wearing white sacred vestments as for Mass, together with the ministers and a representative group of the faithful, goes to a suitable place, either in front of the church door or inside the church itself, where at least a large part of the faithful can conveniently participate in the rite.
10. When the Priest reaches the place appointed for the blessing of the candles, candles are lit while the antiphon *Behold, our Lord (no. 3) or another appropriate chant is sung.*
11. Then, after the greeting and address, the Priest blesses the candles, as above nos. 4-5; and then the procession to the altar takes place, with the singing (nos. 6-7). for Mass, what is indicated in no. 8 above is observed.

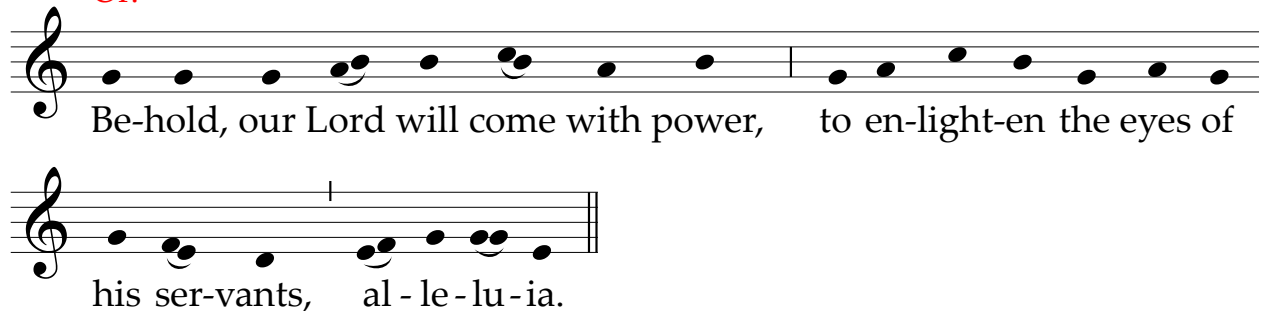
2 February
THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

While the candles are being lit, the following antiphon or another appropriate chant is sung.



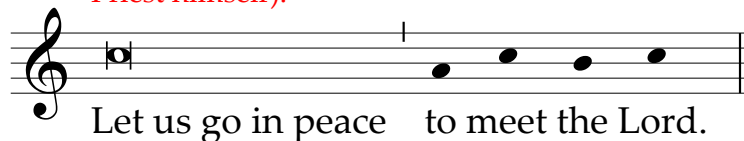
Ec-ce Dó-mi-nus nos-ter cum vir-tú-te vé-ni-et, ut il-lú-mi-net
ó-cu-los ser-vó-rum su-ó-rum, al-le-lú-ia.

Or:



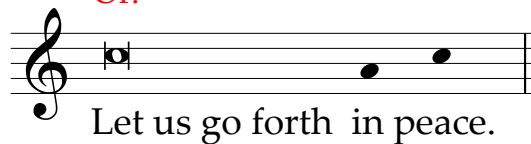
Be-hold, our Lord will come with power, to en-light-en the eyes of
his ser-vants, al-le-lu-ia.

Then the Priest receives from the Deacon or a minister the lighted candle prepared for him and the procession begins, with the Deacon announcing (or, if there is no Deacon, the Priest himself):



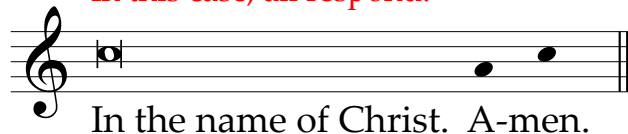
Let us go in peace to meet the Lord.

Or:



Let us go forth in peace.

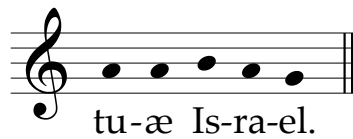
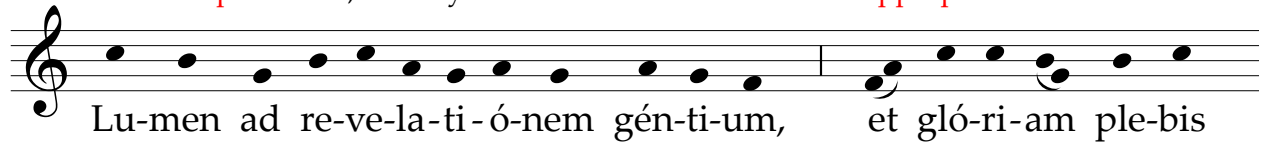
In this case, all respond:



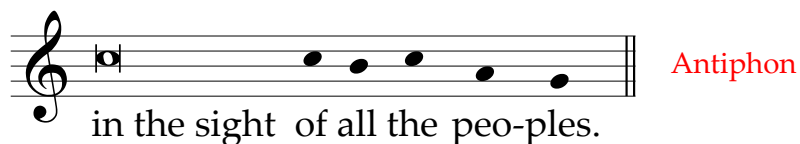
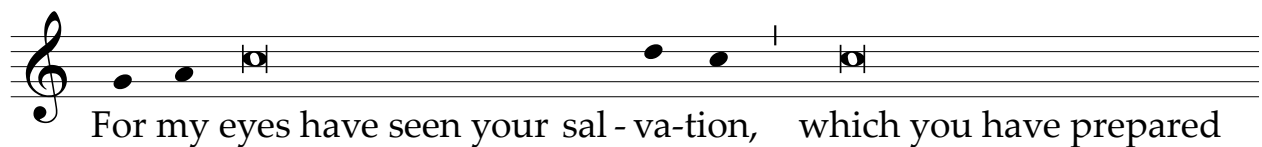
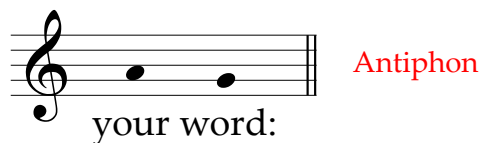
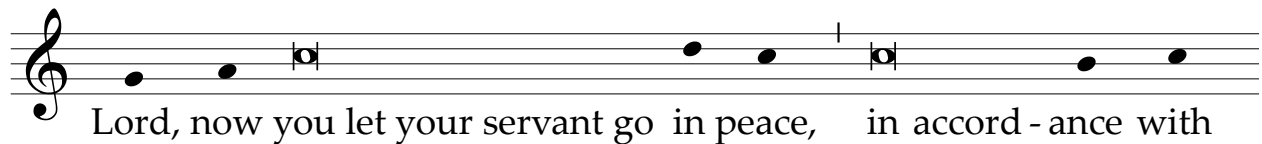
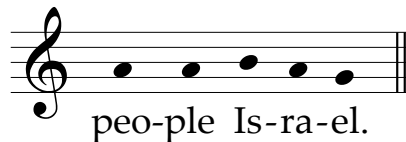
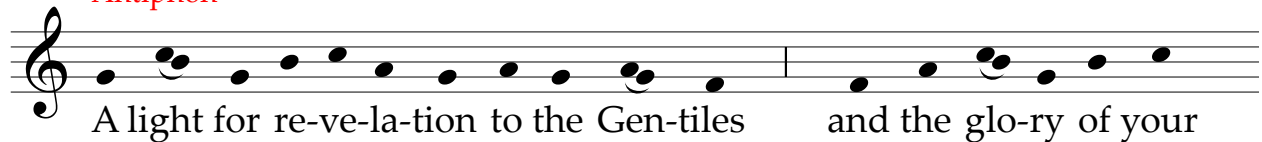
In the name of Christ. A-men.

Antiphon

All carry lighted candles. As the procession moves forward, one or other of the antiphons that follow is sung, namely the antiphon A light for revelation with the canticle (Lk 2:29-32), or the antiphon Sion, adorn your bridal chamber or another appropriate chant.




Or:
Antiphon




The mystery of the Presentation of the Lord



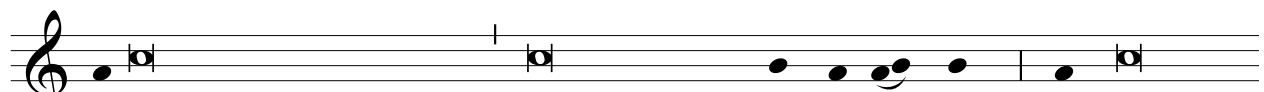
V. The Lord be with you. R. And with your spir-it.



V. Lift up your hearts. R. We lift them up to the Lord.



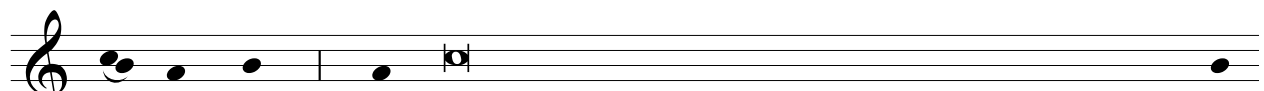
V. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. R. It is right and just.



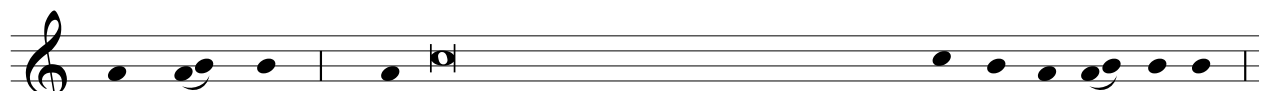
It is truly right and just, our duty and our sal-va-tion, al-ways and




everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and e-



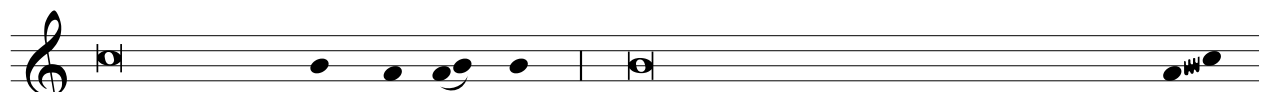
-ter-nal God. For your co-eternal Son was presented on this day in



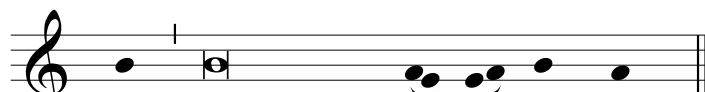
the Tem-ple and revealed by the Spirit as the glo-ry of Is-ra-el



and Light of the na-tions. And so, we, too, go forth, rejoicing to



encounter your Sal-va-tion, and with the Angels and Saints praise



you, as without end we ac-claim:

2 February

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

Be-hold, our Lord will come with power, to en-light-en the eyes

This musical score is for the first part of the hymn. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a soprano or alto clef, and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Be-hold, our Lord will come with power, to en-light-en the eyes".

of his ser-vants, al - le - lu - ia.

This musical score is for the second part of the hymn. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a soprano or alto clef, and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "of his ser-vants, al - le - lu - ia.".

Then the Priest receives from the Deacon or a minister the lighted candle prepared for him and the procession begins, with the Deacon announcing (or, if there is no Deacon, the Priest himself):

Let us go in peace to meet the Lord.

This musical score is for the third part of the hymn. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a soprano or alto clef, and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Let us go in peace to meet the Lord.".

Or:

Let us go forth in peace.

This musical score is for the fourth part of the hymn. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a soprano or alto clef, and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Let us go forth in peace.".

In this case, all respond:

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef line with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. It begins with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and ends with a double bar line. The middle and bottom staves are grouped by a brace on the left and represent a piano accompaniment. The middle staff is a treble clef line, and the bottom staff is a bass clef line. Both have a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. The piano part begins with a whole rest in both hands, followed by a half note chord of G4 and B-flat4. This is followed by a half note chord of G4 and B-flat4, and finally a half note chord of G4 and B-flat4. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

In the name of Christ. A-men.

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2 February

THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

Antiphon

A light for re-ve-la-tion to the Gen-tiles and the glo-ry of your

This musical system consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef line with a vocal line. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

peo-ple Is-ra-el.

This musical system consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef line with a vocal line. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

Lord, now you let your servant go in peace, in accord - ance with

This musical system consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef line with a vocal line. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

your word:

Antiphon

This musical system consists of three staves. The top staff is a single treble clef line with a vocal line. The middle and bottom staves are a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The word "Antiphon" is written in red text to the right of the system.

For my eyes have seen your sal - va - tion, which you have prepared

This musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line in G minor (one flat) with a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are written below it. The bottom two staves are piano accompaniment, with the right hand in the upper staff and the left hand in the lower staff. The piano part features a simple harmonic accompaniment with some sustained notes.

Antiphon

in the sight of all the peo-ples.

This musical score also consists of three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line in G minor. The lyrics are written below it. The bottom two staves are piano accompaniment. The word "Antiphon" is written in red text to the right of the top staff. The piano part provides a simple accompaniment for the antiphon.

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