Bishop: Most Reverend Héctor Vila, DD; Pastor: Fr. Marc Lalonde
Reconciliation: 30 minutes before Mass.
Mass Times: 1st Mass of Sunday: Saturday, 7.00 pm. Sunday, 10.00 am. Weekdays Mon & Fri, 6.00 pm
Monday: Exposition of Blessed Sacrament, Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Novena, & Rosary, after Mass

Our Lady of Victory parish is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Whitehorse, Canada

Finance Committee: Fr. Marc Lalonde, Pat Banks, vacant
Hospitality Committee: Joe Hanrath, Frank Hanrath; Liturgy: Pat Banks

Knights of Columbus: meetings are 7.00 pm, 2nd Wed CYO Hall. Contact Domagoj Pehar, 332-0835
Catholic Women’s League: meetings 7.00 pm, 2nd Tues, CYO Hall. Contact Carol Vanderbyl, 633-5348
Sacred Heart Edge Youth Group (Youth on Fire): For Grades 5 to 8, Fridays @, 7:00pm

February 2, 2020: Presentation of the Lord
Candlemas

... Mary and Joseph brought the child Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, ...

Luke 2.22

Presentation of the Lord
Artist: Unknown. Source: diocesan.com
Today we celebrate the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord. This feast is inspired by the Lucan account of Mary and Joseph bringing the infant Jesus to the temple in order to fulfill their obligations under the law of Moses. However, the feast has received three different names over the centuries related to different aspects of the Gospel account.

In honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the feast was celebrated in many countries as the Feast of the Purification. Mary, an immaculate virgin and unstained by original sin, was not strictly bound to make an offering for her purification. Yet, in humility she complied with the ritual purification required of new mothers on the fortieth day after delivering a son. Also, St. Luke tells us that Mary and Joseph offered “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons,” the offering required of those too poor to purchase a lamb for sacrifice, reminding us of the poverty of the holy family.

In honor of the infant Jesus, the feast is officially called the Feast of the Presentation. Tradition has seen the presentation of Jesus in the temple as a fulfillment of the words of the prophet Malachi, “suddenly there will come to the temple the LORD whom you seek, and the messenger of the covenant whom you desire” (Mal 3:1). The prayerful believers, Simeon and Anna, represent all the faithful Jewish people who longed to see the messiah and the redemption of Israel.

The specific requirement of the law of Moses was that a firstborn son, the “male that opened the womb,” be presented to a priest and ransomed by the payment of five shekels (Num 18:16). St. John Paul II, in his encyclical on the virtues of St. Joseph, remarked that, along with his responsibility to see to the circumcision and naming of the child, the ransoming of Jesus further affirmed Joseph’s legal guardianship.

St. John Paul II wrote:

The ransoming of the first-born is another obligation of the father, and it is fulfilled by Joseph. Represented in the first-born is the people of the covenant, ransomed from slavery in order to belong to God. Here too, Jesus — who is the true “price” of ransom — not only “fulfills” the Old Testament rite, but at the same time transcends it, since he is not a subject to be redeemed, but the very author of redemption. (Redemptoris Custos, 12)

Lastly, the feast is called Candlemas due to the liturgical custom of blessing and processing with candles proper to this day. That tradition grew out of the declaration by Simeon that the infant Jesus would be a “light for revelation to the Gentiles.” Thus, the feast became an occasion for celebration with candlelit processions to symbolize the light of Christ entering the temple.

The blessing and procession with candles on Candlemas, still included as an option in the Roman missal, has become less common with the advent of electricity. We now take for granted that we can fill our homes and churches with light at the flick of a switch. However, in the middle ages Candlemas was among the most splendid celebrations of the year. Those candles, crafted laboriously from yellow beeswax bleached white in the sun became symbols of resistance against the darkness of sin and death.

The thirteenth-century Dominican Friar Jacob Voragine, a contemporary of Thomas Aquinas, offered a beautiful reflection on the symbolism of candles in his homily for today’s celebration.

On this feast day we too make a procession, carrying in our hands a lighted candle, which signifies Jesus, and bearing it into the churches. In the candle there are three things — the wick, the wax, and the fire. These three signify three things about Christ: the wax is a sign of his body, which was born of the Virgin Mary without corruption of the flesh . . . ; the wick signifies his most pure soul, hidden in his body; the fire or the light stands for his divinity because our God is a consuming fire. (The Golden Legend, “On the Feast of the Purification of Mary”)

Thus, in the candles we use in liturgy, whether the altar candles, votive candles, processional candles, baptismal candles, or the pascal candle, we see a symbol of Christ himself. The use of candles can raise our thoughts to the mystery of God made flesh, the true light of salvation. Today, we pray that the light of Christ may shine through each of us. May the fire of the Holy Spirit enkindle our hearts and allow us to dispel the darkness of sin and sorrow from our lives.

Fr. Randall Meissen, LC

Fr. Randall Meissen, LC, ministers at Ss. Felicitas and Perpetua Church in San Marino, CA.
Fr. Roger Karban’s essay for February 2, 2020: Presentation of the Lord


Luke seems to have combined two separate Jewish rituals in Sunday’s Gospel about the offering of the firstborn to Yahweh and the mother’s purification after childbirth (Lk 2: 22-40). But the action we usually reflect on is the one that pertains to Jesus, not Mary. To understand its significance, we must explore one of Scripture’s strangest narratives: Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac in Genesis 22, a passage so significant for early Christians that they instinctively included it among the seven Hebrew Scripture readings proclaimed during the Easter Vigil, Christianity’s most important celebration. Jesus’ first followers quickly discovered a parallel between Isaac’s carrying the wood for his sacrifice and Jesus carrying His cross; between Isaac’s miraculous deliverance and Jesus’ resurrection. But what bothers modern people is Yahweh’s command to Abraham: “Take your son, Isaac, your only one, whom you love, and... offer him up as a holocaust!” How can a loving God insist that a parent kill a child?

Anti-pagan

The only way to appreciate this narrative is to understand that the prophets who composed it in the eighth century before Christ were leading the struggle against child sacrifice. Offering one’s first-born male was an acceptable practice among the pagan, fertility-cult devotees with whom the Israelites lived and mingled. We know from Scripture that many followers of Yahweh imitated their example in order to acquire the fertility such sacrifices guaranteed. Some even believed Yahweh wanted them to do so. That’s why the two most important parts of the narrative are Abraham’s determination to do whatever Yahweh commands, and his willingness to shift gears and use a ram in place of Isaac once he finds out that Yahweh really doesn’t want human sacrifices. The substitution of an animal for a child became the normal way Jews demonstrated both thankfulness for their child’s birth and trust that this child is part of God’s pledge of fertility for the Chosen People. This switch from one kind of sacrifice to another also played a significant role in early Christianity. Once Jews started to prohibit Jesus’ followers from participating in the Jerusalem temple sacrifices, Christians started to look at sacrifice from a different angle.

Sacrifice

Educated and trained as Jews, Jesus’ first disciples continued to offer the same temple sacrifices all Jews offered. They, like Malachi, regarded such rituals to be essential to their practice of faith (Malachi 3: 1-4). They were certain that they always would be offered. Yahweh guaranteed this by constantly purifying the priests, so they would offer the sacrifices correctly. Stopped from performing those rituals, Christians began to look at sacrifice in other ways. First, as we hear in the second reading (Heb 2: 14-18), they started to regard Jesus’ death and resurrection as a sacrifice, making Him the “merciful and faithful high priest (who)...expiates the sins of the people.” Second, they also started to interpret their own imitation of Jesus’ death and resurrection as a sacrifice; something we hear Simeon allude to in the Gospel when he tells Mary, “This child is destined to be the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be contradicted - and you yourself a sword shall pierce.” Mary, Luke’s model Christian, will be pierced by her faith in her son, just as surely as Isaac was about to be pierced by Abraham’s knife. Changes in the way we look at sacrifice run all through our readings. But they’re only significant to those who are open enough to experience changes in how Jesus expects them to offer themselves to Him and to others.

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The Pope’s Prayer Intention for February 2020: Listen to the Migrants’ Cries

We pray that the cries of our migrant brothers and sisters, victims of criminal trafficking, may be heard and considered.
Msgr. Joe's Homily for The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord:
The Feast of the Encounter

This weekend we celebrate a feast that seems to bring us back to Christmastime. The feast is the Presentation of the Lord. This Feast used to be called the Purification of Mary, remembering an ancient rite when women went to the Temple to be prayed over after childbirth. This same custom, by the way, continued in the Church up to the fifties in a blessing that used to be called Churching.

A number of years ago the Church changed this feast from a Feast of Mary, the Purification, to a Feast of the Lord. Because Simeon called Jesus the Light of the Nations, this feast is also the day that candles are blessed. It is sometimes called Candelmas. In the Eastern Church, this feast was called the Feast of the Encounter, the first encounter of the Old Testament, represented by Simeon and Anna and the Temple, with the New Testament, represented by the Lord. Jesus is presented in the Temple following the ancient Jewish laws. In the New Law of the Kingdom of God, Jesus’ own body would become the New Temple.

The image that keeps occurring at me in this feast is that of a young mother and father and their new baby. So many times, I've enjoyed watching our young couples bringing their new baby to Church. They are so excited about the birth of their treasure, so grateful to God for this child that they cannot wait to bring the child before the Lord to thank God properly. I really believe that is what Mary and Joseph were doing when they walked into the Temple with Jesus. Simeon, like all of us, wanted to hold the new baby. When he does, a spirit of prophecy comes upon him. He realizes that in this child he is in the presence of God's salvation, the Light of the Nations.

Simeon also prophesies the pains that Mary would have as she witnessed God's plan being worked out in this child. The devotion to the seven sorrows of Mary grew from this: The Prophecy of Simeon, the Flight into Egypt, the Three Days’ Loss of the child Jesus in the Temple, Meeting Jesus with the Cross, the Crucifixion, the Taking Down from the Cross, the Burial. The encounter with the Lord would demand continual sacrifice from all including Mary. The reward of this encounter is great, the presence of the Savior.

The Lord is presented as an infant to the Temple, now the Temple will never more be the same. The abiding presence of God, the Holy of Holies, is now transferred from the inner sanctuary to the child in Simeon’s arms. We all were presented to the Church as infants for our baptism. The Church will never again be the same. Now a special presence of the Holy of Holies, the presence of God's intimate life, dwells within the newly baptized.

Every child born and baptized, every single one of us, presented to the Lord, carries within himself or herself a unique image of the Holy of Holies. Each one of us is called to seek that image within us, to develop it. We are called to allow God to take over our lives. This presentation with its resulting purification results in sorrow, for to follow the Lord means to sacrifice our own material inclinations and our physical desires for the sake of the cultivation of the spiritual within us. This presentation results in joy, for when we live with the Lord we have meaning in our lives.

"Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears from death into life." The encounter with the Lord is a step into the spiritual. All that we have will be lost by the end of our lives, but Christ and his love and the way we love him in others, that is the life that is forever.

On this Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, we ask God to transform us from people tied to the material to those whose encounter with Christ leads us to live for the spiritual.

This material is used with permission of its author, Rev. Msgr. Joseph A. Pellegrino, Diocese of St. Petersburg, FL

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Wednesday February 5: Saint Agatha, Virgin, Martyr

Thursday February 6: Saints Paul Miki and his Companions, Martyrs
First Congress of Pastoral Care for the Elderly

This First Congress, geared to reflect on the pastoral needs of the elderly in society, will be held from January 29-31, 2020, in Rome’s Augustinianum Congress Center.

Pope Francis’ Request

This event, organized by the Dicastery for the Laity, the Family, and Life, is being held in response to a request of Pope Francis who, on numerous occasions, has highlighted the role of the elderly in the transmission of the faith, in the dialogue with young people, and in the protection of peoples’ roots.

In face of the prolongation of life and the aging of the population, the Holy Father acknowledged that “Christian spirituality has been taken by surprise,” and “a renewed ecclesial reflection” is necessary on what he describes as “the blessing of a long life.”

At the same time, the Pontiff has asked long-lived people to be protagonists of the Church’s work and “not to throw the oars in the boat,” because we must “invent old age.”

This first international meeting, dedicated to the pastoral care of the elderly, will reflect on how to address the throwaway culture in the case of this age group, on its role in the family, and on its peculiar vocation in the Church. Some 550 experts and pastoral agents from 60 countries will take part in the meeting. Then on Friday, January 31, the Pope will receive them in audience.

Source: Zenit

If there is any wisdom that I can never get enough of, it is that of Etty Hillesum. In her journal, this young Jewish woman, who died at Auschwitz, talks of the existence of a well hidden in the depths of her being. In this well, she writes, lives God: “Sometimes I am there too. But more often stones and grit block the well, and God is buried beneath. Then he must be dug out again”. To be in relationship with God, we must free ourselves of everything that prevents us from encountering him. I truly believe this. God is this hidden presence, this spring that can quench our thirst. We must go down to find him. All it took for me to experience it was to let myself be led by the weakest, the most foolish and the most oppressed of our societies. A long road lay before me. I had to patiently learn to remove these stones, this rubble that prevented me from encountering God. And I am far from being finished. L’Arche allowed me to discover how much the walls that separate people can seem difficult to knock down, reinforced by the stones that lodge deep in our hearts and block the spring. It’s all about how to remove them.

Jean Vanier

Rachel’s Corner:

“I am going to continue releasing my pain and guilt and be free. I feel much more relaxed now than when I first arrived. I had no idea there were any options to being able to be free of what I was carrying.”
- Testimonial

Relief for what you feel from having participated in an abortion decision is a process, and it can begin by attending a Rachel’s Vineyard Retreat weekend of healing. Come and be freed of the burden.

info@rachelsvineyardkelowna.com 250-762-2273 rvwhitehorse@gmail.com

Local News

Your Prayers are asked for: all who are ill; the repose of souls of those departed and their families.

New: Hospice Yukon is hosting Living with Loss - a free, 2-hour seminar on healthy grief and self care next Wednesday February 5, 6:30-8:30pm at the Whitehorse Public Library. Learn about the grief cycle that accompanies any kind of loss (death, divorce, illness, etc.) and take home practical tools to improve your self care and offer support to others during times of grief or stress. This is not a support group. Participants will not be asked to share any personal information.

To register please phone Hospice Yukon: 667-7429 www.hospiceyukon.net
• On Monday, Feb 3rd, the 12:10 pm Mass at Sacred Heart will be for the repose of the soul of Eva Gratz, at the request of the CWL. Lunch will follow in the CYO Hall, all are welcome.

• Fr. Marc will now be available @ OLV on Mondays 10-12 noon, 4-6 pm, & 7-8 pm; on Fridays 4–6 pm. At other times he can be reached by telephone at 633-2647.

• Taize at Whitehorse United Church: Feb. 16 @ 7.30 pm. [www.taize.fr]. Next date March 15.

• 2020 Offertory Envelopes: are ready for pick up from the table at back of OLV. Please fill out the grey envelope at front of box with your full mailing address. CRA requires your full address on the receipt: no address = no receipt. If you do not have a box and would like one, please ask.

• OLV Food Bank Outreach: At request of WFB, selection for January is Tomato Sauce

• Please be considerate of others and park as close together as possible. Leaving an unnecessary ¾ of a vehicle space between vehicles means 3 vehicles take up 5 spaces so, some to have a long snowy walk.

• Pastoral Care of the Sick: If you are hospitalized, please be sure to identify yourself as Catholic when being admitted. Family members are also asked to notify the clergy of shut-ins, hospitalized parishioners and those entering Continuing Care who would like Fr. Marc to visit.

• To register your child or make enquiries for First Confession and First Communion classes, for Baptismal and other Sacramental Preparation, and Home Visits for parishioners Please contact Fr. Marc.

• A big Thank You to those who clean our church. Please be considerate and wipe your feet in the porch.