

Nunc dimittis

2nd February is the feast of the Presentation of the Lord. The Collect for the day speaks about his “presentation in substance of our flesh.” This reinforces the fundamental message of Christmas that Jesus was truly human and that his presentation in the Temple was an offering to God of all that makes us truly human. Like everything else about Jesus this was for us but not instead of us, and we need to learn how to allow ourselves, our spirits, souls and bodies, to be presented to God as “a reasonable, holy and lively sacrifice” (to use the language of the Book of Common Prayer.) Simeon’s song, the *Nunc Dimittis*, is a wonderful prayer for every day, especially in the evening and towards the end of life. He rejoiced because he had seen God’s promise fulfilled.

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace :
according to thy word.

For mine eyes have seen :
thy salvation;

Which thou hast prepared :
before the face of all people;

To be a light to lighten the Gentiles :
and to be the glory of thy people Israel