

February 2

FOR THE PURIFICATION OF THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN

104.⁵⁵⁹ First Point

The Blessed Virgin went to the temple to be purified at the time prescribed by the Law.⁵⁶⁰ She submitted to this Law and did not wish to claim any exemption even though she was not obliged by it, because she was the mother of God's Son whom she had conceived and brought into the world without losing her virginity.

Admire Mary's humility in this mystery, for she appears here as an ordinary woman although she was far superior to all others by reason of her two roles as virgin and mother. Learn from her not to want to be distinguished from others, not to ask for or to seek any exemptions in the practice of your rules. The more faithful and exact you are to observe these rules, the more God will fill you with his grace and the more joy he will give you in your state.

104.2 Second Point

While going through the ceremony of purification, the Most Blessed Virgin, in order to obey the Law to its fullest extent, offered her Son to God because he was her first born.⁵⁶¹ The eternal Father, who willed that this dear Son be one day immolated on the cross to expiate our sins, returned him for the time being to the authority of his holy mother after she had bought him back by the offering prescribed by the Law.⁵⁶²

This offering which the Son of God made of himself to his Father was at that moment only an interior one, although on the part of the Most Blessed Virgin it was made exteriorly. Jesus was waiting to make the exterior offering of himself on the tree of the cross before the eyes of all the world.

You offered yourselves to God when you left the world. Did you hold back anything of yourselves at that time? Did you give yourselves entirely to him? Have you taken back nothing of the offering you made to God at that time? You should not be content to have made this offering of yourselves to God once; you should renew this offering every day and consecrate all your actions to him by not performing any of them except for him.

104.3 Third Point

In appreciation for the offering that was made of Jesus Christ and which he made of himself in this mystery, and for the humility shown by the Most Blessed Virgin, God inspired the holy old man, Simeon, to proclaim publicly the greatness of Jesus, declaring that Jesus had come to be the Light which would enlighten the Gentiles and be the glory of the people of Israel.⁵⁶³ He then invoked all blessings on his holy Mother.

Ah! how good it is to give oneself to God! Even in this life he rewards and fills with very tangible consolations the soul that consecrates itself to him. He causes others to esteem and honor those who are happy in humiliations. The more you give to God, the more he will bless you; the more you are despised by others, the greater you will be before God.

Today this feast is referred to as the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, which was the original focus of the celebration. As such, De La Salle's meditation corresponds well in the second and third points. The day has also been called Candlemas Day from the time of the tenth century, because this was the day when candles were blessed and carried in procession, possibly a devotional practice based on Simeon's words in the Gospel that Jesus is the light who reveals God to all nations.

559 Number 103 is one of the six meditations in the Additions which are found at the end of the original edition and in this edition also.

560 lk 2:22
561 Lk 2:23
562 Lk 2:24
563 Lk 2:32