



[If you haven't already, begin your meal with meal prayer, then take turns reading these boxes aloud, following the directions where applicable]

## Blessed are Those who Mourn

This beatitude reminds us that life on earth is temporary, and our final eternal home is heaven. Death was not a part of God's original plan for us. When sin entered the world, death entered the world. Death can be considered in two ways. First, physical death. We experience sadness, grief, and loss when someone we love dies. Even Jesus wept when he found out that Lazarus had died. But even in these times of mourning, we find blessing. Mourning helps us to continue to draw closer to God and depend on him more.

Second, sin leads to spiritual death. When we mourn for what we have done wrong and confess our sins, God blesses us with his forgiveness. When we honestly mourn evil words, evil deeds, and evil policies, God sees our sorrow and comforts us with the knowledge that it will not always be this way. This beatitude is focused on the fact that life is a pilgrimage to the Kingdom of Heaven.

## The Presentation

On February 2 we celebrate Jesus' presentation at the temple. Although Mary was sinless and Jesus was God, they still followed Jewish laws for purification and dedication to God out of obedience. Simeon, a devout and upright man, and the prophetess Anna recognize Jesus' Lordship as Messiah. When Simeon receives Jesus, he blesses him, and prophesies Jesus is the Savior." Candlemas" is a traditional name given to today's feast because as early as the fifth century, the custom of celebrating this feast with lighted candles developed. The lit candles symbolized Simeon's prophecy that Jesus would be a light to the whole world. On this day, we also reflect on the gift of consecrated life. Religious brothers and sisters (monks and nuns) imitate Jesus through vows to remain poor, chaste and obedient. They remind us that life in Jesus fills us with peace the world cannot give, like Simeon and Anna coming happily to the sunset of their lives with the Lord in their arms and joy in their hearts.

## Discussion

[These questions are a spark for conversation, not a strict outline.]

- What can you recall about the beatitudes?
- If you take seriously that "we are on our way to heaven", how does that change your view of death?
- Share stories of anyone you have known who has died, and then say a prayer together for their souls for grace on their journey to Heaven.
- Who does your family know that is mourning (whether recent or not)? How can you support someone who is mourning?
- Take a moment to think about the sins that are taking away your spiritual life. Then discuss when your family can attend confession this month.

## Activity & Prayer

[For this activity section, you will need the additional resource provided by the parish. If you don't have it, you can download it on our website]

Play a game from the handout to help demonstrate this week's beatitude. Then close with the beatitude prayer below. Consider dimming the lights and having each person hold a candle to signify the light of Christ for Candlemas.

### Beatitudes Prayer

*Lord, make me poor spirit, so I can receive the kingdom of heaven.*

*Lord, when I mourn, help me find comfort.*

*Lord, make me meek, so that I may inherit the land.*

*Lord, help me to hunger and thirst for righteousness, so I may be satisfied.*

*Lord, make me merciful, so I may obtain your mercy.*

*Lord, make me pure of heart, so I may see you.*

*Lord, help me to make peace, so I may be called your child.*

*Lord, when I am persecuted for righteousness' sake, show me your kingdom.*

## Extras

- Have a Mass said for someone who has passed away
- Receive the sacrament of reconciliation
- Read Luke 2:22-35, the account of the presentation including the Cantic of Simeon
- Bring any candles you use for prayer to the church and have them blessed (see "looking ahead" below for details)
- Write a thank you note to a religious community, such as the Carmelites at the annunciation hermitage in Austin
- Read more about the feast of the presentation

<https://www.simplycatholic.com/the-feast-of-the-presentation/>

## Sacramental Life

This week's journal prompt for first reconciliation/communion:

*Jesus said FORGIVE...NOT SEVEN TIMES BUT SEVENTY-SEVEN TIMES. (Mt 18:21b-22) - What do you think he meant by this? How would you do this?*

This week's confirmation work is: **The Sacraments of Initiation**  
Watch Decision Point 7.3: The True Presence

Read: Transubstantiation  
What is transubstantiation? How would you explain to someone what the Eucharist is? How would you explain that the Eucharist is not a symbol, but the body and blood of Christ?

Links & information found at <https://staugustinedward.org/confirmation-preparation/>

## For Next Week, Feb 8: Looking Ahead

- See the parish or website for additional handouts and coloring pages

### Coming Up:

- Feb 2 (Candlemas): At the morning Mass Father blesses the candles that will be used in the Church throughout the year and any candles parishioners bring to be used in their homes
- Feb. 3: Memorial of St. Blase and the blessing of throats using the candles blessed at Candlemas
- Confirmation AND First Reconciliation/Communion Students - your whole family should plan to attend on Feb 8 6-8 pm at St Augustine for a formation night.

