

Lumen ad Revel.
(Gregorian Chant 1st)

V.O. Luke 2²²⁻³² (DVC p 268)

Today, is Candlemas, the celebration of the Presentation of O. Lord in the Temple at Jerusalem, 40 days after His birth. St Luke in his gospel presents the scene as part of the mystery of the coming of Christ the Saviour — a revelation to the whole world, a light for all people to see. So, Simeon who stands for everybody who's looking for the saviour to come to rescue the world from the mess it's got itself into, can now rest in joy and peace because he has seen with his own eyes the Light that has come. And the widow, Anna, too praises God for the grace she has received for her hope and her service. But, as Simeon saw, the light brings with it conflict as well because it slows up so much what we really are, and that the Light of the World is not entirely welcome. Today, then, the Christian church has its festival of lights, in the blessing and procession of candles, from which the name Candlemas comes. It seems there were two origins of this festival day. The processional part was, quite early, an event kept on 2nd Febr., and in both Rome and the Eastern churches it usually ended up in a church dedicated to Mary, the mother of Christ, as it was mainly a celebration in honour of our Lady. But in the Eastern churches especially, there already was a festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple: and soon the two events came together, with the blessing of candles and the singing of Simeon's song established on this day. Devotion to Mary, especially in the Middle Ages, gave stress to the feast day as Our Lady's day, though we've now MP 162