

The mystery of the Purification is brimfull of lessons for us all. The name itself is suggestive of the state in which we should keep our souls in order to receive Jesus worthily. Our souls should be purified, not only of all mortal offenses, but from all thoughts, intentions, desires, and affections which are of a nature to wound the delicay of the Divine Guest whose visit we expect.

Let us ponder over the fundamental virtues of this mystery to see if we possess the qualities which the Gospel attributes to the holy old man who, less fortunate than we, could open but his arms to receive his God.

First, "*He was Just*" — Justus — He possessed that primary justice which excludes from the soul all that is displeasing to God. He also possessed that higher justice which comprises an assemblage of pious habits and acquired virtues. We all owe this higher justice to the God who gives Himself to us. Let us prepare for our Communion by the exercise of the greatest of virtues: Faith, Hope, and Charity. Bossuet advises us to cultivate these virtues so that, by degrees, we may become so familiar with the act that they will rise spontaneously from the heart without any effort whatsoever on our part. Secondly: *Simeon was a God fearing man* — "*Timoratus.*" It is quite natural that we should be penetrated with a holy fear when reflecting upon God's visit to us.

The morning Guest is the God whom the Angels adore in trembling and he who receives is the very essence of all that is despicable and sinful. With far greater reason than the Centurion we cry out: "Lord, I am not worthy"! And yet, we must not close up the avenues of the soul to the sweet sentiments of peace and confidence. The fear which we experience should tend to keep us recollected, but not to trouble us. Our fear should be filial. We must remember that Jesus comes to us because we need Him, and we need Him because we have made ourselves miserable and poor and mean, and He alone can make us better and nobler.

Thirdly: *Simeon was awaiting the consolation of Israel* — "*Expectans consolationem Israel.*" Every faculty of our souls should be awake and calmly longing for the Divine Presence. Simeon's trustful love was rewarded by