

Holy Family B SML 2017
LK 2:22-40

Ever since Israel was delivered from the bondage of the Egyptians, after the firstborn of the Egyptians had been slain, the firstborn of the Jews had always been looked upon as one dedicated to God. And so forty days after His birth, the Christ Child was brought to the Temple to be presented to God, for it is written in the Book of Exodus that the firstborn belonged to God:

Consecrate to me every first-born that opens the womb among the Israelites, both of man and beast, for it belongs to me.

As law abiding Jews then, Mary and Joseph dedicated their first born to God. But their dedication of the first-born Son was absolute and complete, for this dedication, this consecration would lead Christ to the Cross.

Now the traditional offering for consecration was a lamb and a turtledove if the parents were rich, and two doves or two pigeons if they were poor. Thus the poor father Joseph who had the blood of kings in his veins, and the poor mother Mary who brought the Lamb of God into the world, had no lamb to offer. And all of this took place in accord with the dictate in the law of the Lord - everything, except what was said by the high priest Simeon.

The words of the High Priest as recorded by Luke the evangelist, were recorded for every generation to read and I am

sure they were never forgotten by Mary. In Simeon's canticle, known as the *Nunc Dimmitis* (Dismiss Your Servant) prayed every night during compline by priests and religious throughout the world, Simeon exclaimed with great joy that the Christ Child would be the light to the Gentiles and the glory of Israel. And then to his Mother Mary, in not so many words: "Your Son will be the Divine Disturber. He will be a sign that will be opposed." And because He will be opposed, your heart a sword will pierce. Your heart will be broken.

The Child would create terrible strife between good and evil, and about him there would be no compromise:

- ✓ only acceptance or rejection,
- ✓ sheep or goats,
- ✓ good soil or rocky ground,
- ✓ wheat or chaff,
- ✓ faithful servants or dishonest ones,
- ✓ wise bridesmaids or foolish ones,
- ✓ resurrection or death.

Your Son will be the Divine Disturber. "The thoughts of many hearts will be laid bare." This Child will expose:

- ✓ the motives,
- ✓ the secret attitudes,
- ✓ the inner dispositions.

Countless times does the gospel record that Jesus knew their thoughts and challenged them:

Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, "Why are you thinking such thoughts?"

They sent some Pharisees and Herodians to him to ensnare him in his speech. Knowing their hypocrisy, Jesus said to them, "Why are you testing me?"

Jesus knew the thoughts of all who were to encounter Him.

- ✓ Pilate would stall, and then weaken;
- ✓ Herod would mock;
- ✓ Judas would lean to a kind of greedy social security, and then hang himself;
- ✓ Nicodemus would sneak out the dark of night to find the Light;
- ✓ tax collectors would become honest;
- ✓ prostitutes, pure;
- ✓ rich young men, empty;
- ✓ Peter would repent.

From that day in the Temple even until today, Jesus was and is the Divine Disturber in many areas of life, but since this is the Feast of the Holy Family, Jesus is the divine disturber within the family.

Do you think I have come to establish peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. From now on a household of five will be divided, three against two and two against three; a father will be divided against his son and a son against his

father, a mother against her daughter and a daughter against her mother.

Honey you look great, down to six percent body fat, got that 32 inch waist, but five nights a week at the gym means five nights a week you don't read a bedtime story to our son.

Every time you cut me down with your tongue, you have broken our vow to love and honor each other for the rest of our lives. You know, marital infidelity is not the only way to break a marriage vow.

- ✓ The Divine Disturber will disturb consciences to be formed by gospel values.
- ✓ The Divine Disturber will disturb children to respect their parents.
- ✓ The Divine Disturber will disturb mothers and fathers to be good parents.
- ✓ The Divine Disturber will disturb spouses to be faithful to all their marriage vows and to love and honor each other for the rest of their lives.

Ever since the Presentation of the Christ Child in the Temple, our Blessed Lord has been the "Divine Disturber."