



PRESENTATION OF OUR LORD – FEBRUARY 2, 2020

Tomorrow we will celebrate the feast of St. Blase. As is our custom here at "Our Lady" we will bless throats after Mass today and we invite you to come forward after Mass, as you do for the reception of Holy Communion.

You are also invited to take one of the blessed candles with you as you go home today. They are here in the sanctuary in the fire-side baskets. Before we get to that point in our proceedings, let me share with you an interesting story.

A scholar was conducting a study of an Amish village. You are familiar with some of their customs. They are a branch of the Mennonite church and live in traditional rural villages far from industrialization and technology - no computers, televisions, refrigerators or telephones.

In his study of the Amish village school, the researcher noticed that Amish children never screamed or yelled. That surprised him. So he decided to check it out with the schoolteacher.

He told the teacher that he had not once heard an Amish child yell or scream and asked her why that was so. The teacher simply replied, "Did you ever hear an Amish parent yell or scream?" The inference is clear: Like the parents, so the children! The acorn doesn't fall far from the tree.

On this feast of the Presentation of our Lord, we see how Joseph and Mary introduced Jesus at a very early age to the customs and responsibilities of his time.

When the bible says that Jesus went home with Joseph and Mary after his presentation in the temple - and grew in wisdom, age and grace before God and Man, it is telling us that Jesus began to imitate the behavior of his Mother and foster Father and he followed their example...

Why did Jesus grow into a responsible, compassionate, loving adult, willing to give his life for others? Why do Amish children never yell or scream? Jesus is not the only one who lived what he learned.

There are lessons far more important than the ones learned in school. Those are the lessons children learn at home. Mom and Dad are the teachers and at the baptism of their children, they promise to be the best of teachers.

For a few moments in silence, reflect on how you behave in front of children. Recall the haunting words from a song in "South Pacific", "They've got to be taught before it's too late, before they are six or seven or eight, they've got to be taught how to hate."

They also need to be taught how to love.