

grace church joondalup



**DIOCESE OF PERTH
ANGLICAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA
CANDLEMASS
The Presentation of Christ in the Temple
31 January 2010**

My dear Friends

Today's festival is sometimes referred to as a 'hinge' of the Christian Year, because it looks in two directions simultaneously. With one eye we look back to Christmas, while with the other we look forward to Calvary. This is certainly true of Candlemass, but then it is also true of Christmass itself. The nativity stories told by Matthew and Luke actually contain the whole gospel, including the good news of cross and resurrection, in little, in miniature. Candlemass does, however, speed us on our way to Lent and Easter and Pentecost, wishing us 'God speed' for our journey. Because Lent is now very close, it is time for each of us to be thinking about a Lent rule of life. Traditionally, we organize this under three headings: prayer, fasting, and almsgiving – prayer for the good of the soul, fasting for the good of the body, almsgiving for the good of others. Over the next few Sundays I want to reflect briefly on each. In thinking about prayer, I have a few suggestions. First, determine to begin Lent with the Christian community gathered around the Lord's table – don't skip Ash Wednesday and simply turn up on the First Sunday. Second, determine to celebrate Eucharist with us every Sunday rather than every other. Third, come and pray with us as we undertake our Lent studies on Wednesday evenings, as once more we are Living the Questions together as adult disciples of Christ. As for prayer at home each day, I recommend the online community known as Pray-As-You-Go. If you wish to make your confession before Lent, please discuss this with me soon.

with my love

David