



Vox Populi

01 February 2024

To all those who have returned from holidays and our students who returned to school this week – welcome back!

And to all those in our community we hope and pray 2024 will be one of many blessings for you and your family.

In fact praying is something Pope Francis is hoping everyone will be doing a great deal of this year.

The Holy Father has dedicated 2024 to be a Year of Prayer in preparation for the Jubilee Year next year. He has said prayer is the royal road to holiness which enables us to be contemplative even in the midst of activity.

“The Christian, like Mary, is a pilgrim of hope. And this is precisely the theme of the Jubilee of 2025 ‘Pilgrims of hope’ Pope Francis has said.

In order for the Jubilee to be an event that spiritually enriches the life of the Church and of the entire people of God, becoming a concrete sign of hope, Pope Francis has said the Jubilee Year has to be prepared for and lived in individual communities with that spirit of expectation which is typical of Christian hope. The Year of Prayer fully corresponds to this need.

So although our year may have begun with a rush and our calendars are filling quickly, we need to find those moments during each day to foster our relationship with the Lord and seek moments of spiritual rest where prayer becomes nourishment for the Christian life of faith, hope and charity.

This Friday, 2 February, we celebrate the Presentation of the Lord when Mary and Joseph took Jesus up to Jerusalem to the Temple and the priests, in accordance with the dictate in the law of the Lord. They saw Simeon, a devout and righteous man, who is moved by the Holy Spirit and “recognises” Jesus as the Awaited One, the light of the Gentiles.

The Prophetess Anna is also in the Temple, an elderly, godly widow who recognises the presence of God and sees the baby Jesus as the one for whom her people have been waiting.

The feast day is often referred to as Candlemas, since the blessing and procession of candles is traditionally included in the liturgy. It is also the World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life which was founded by Pope John Paul II in 1997 who said consecrated men and women are to be the light in the world, imitating Jesus, the Light of the World.