



## A Trilogy of Poems Inspired by the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple — Luke 2:22-40 RE-SOURCE #1 — February 2, 2023

### “A Poem for Candlemas” by Christopher Villiers

Sweet terrible child, in you death I see,  
Now I may die in peace, as death begins  
Its departure from this world, fails to flee  
Its reckoning by kindling cruel men’s sins.  
The world shall pierce your heart, you’ll pierce it too  
Your poor mother should save up tears to shed  
She’ll see you broken on a cross and rue  
This day’s prophecy when she sees you dead.  
Because of you many shall rise and fall,  
Many shall oppose you, many thirst  
To drink your blood which you shall pour for all  
Give life to some, to others judgement worst.  
Take care my lad, God’s promise in love kept  
All nations give praise, though tears must be wept.

**Christopher Villiers** is a British theologian and freelance writer who has written about religious matters for a wide variety of publications, both academic and popular.



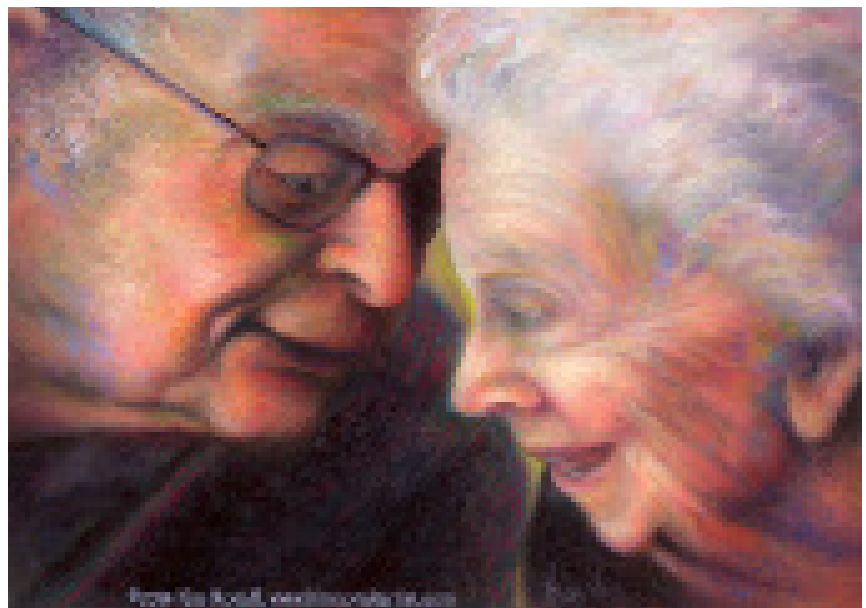
### “The Presentation” by James Torrens, SJ

Simeon, what you’ve been awaiting  
in your weathered skin  
is here now in your clasp,  
the heartbeat of innocence,  
proof that we’re not despaired of.

Widow Anna, steady at prayer  
though on the creakiest of limbs,  
go tell what your vision shows you,  
the youth of the world  
in this surprise of a child.

O cluster of elders  
retelling the feats of a lifetime,  
attend to what’s newest of new,  
this pure light from the source,  
Jesus, the flesh of mercy.

**Janes Torrens, SJ** taught English at Santa Clara University for almost twenty years and was Associate Editor at “America” in the 1990’s.



## “Wait and See (Simeon and Anna)”

by Richard Bauckham

In the drab waiting-room  
the failed travellers, resigned, sleep  
on the hard benches, inured  
to postponement and foul coffee.  
Hope has given up on them.  
There are also the impatient,  
pacing platforms, and the driven,  
purple with frustration, abusing  
their mobiles, for the hardest part  
of waiting is the not doing.  
Truly to wait is pure dependence.  
But waiting too long the heart  
grows sclerotic. Will it still  
be fit to leap when the time comes?  
Prayer is waiting with desire.  
Two aged lives incarnate  
century on century  
of waiting for God, their waiting-room  
his temple, waiting on his presence,  
marking time by practicing  
the cycle of the sacrifices,  
ferial and festival,  
circling onward, spiralling  
towards a centre out ahead,  
seasons of revolving hope.  
Holding out for God who cannot  
be given up for dead, holding  
him to his promises – not now,  
not just yet, but soon, surely,  
eyes will see what hearts await.

## Two aged lives incarnate century on century of waiting for God



Passengers in the waiting room of the train station

## Prayer is waiting with desire

Richard Bauckham is a well-known British biblical scholar and theologian, and writes poetry for a hobby. In this poem he writes of two elderly Jews who waited for many years for the consolation of Israel. Bauckham's definition of prayer is "waiting with desire" and he directs his reader to wait with desire, like Simeon and Anna, for Christ's second coming.

**not now,  
not just yet, but soon, surely,  
eyes will see what hearts  
await**