

Candlemas 2021



I am going to tell a story about two old people who were waiting for a rescuer. They lived a long time ago. These two old people weren't involved in a crash, they weren't in a storm, they weren't even ill. In fact nobody would have said they were in any real danger or difficulty. Their names were Simeon and Anna and they were friends. Anna's husband had died when she was a young woman and since then she had spent her life living in and looking after God's Temple in Jerusalem. Simeon lived in the same city. Both Simeon and Anna loved God very much. Anna would spend her days in God's special house, the Temple, and, while she did all her ordinary tasks, she would sing praises to God. Simeon would spend his days praying and listening to God.





So why did they need a rescuer? Well, both of them were very concerned about their country and their people. The little country of Israel had been taken over by a foreign power. What was worse was that many of the people who had once loved God seemed to have forgotten all about him. Their world was really in quite a mess.



Both Simeon and Anna were getting old but they were both waiting for a special event. God had promised that he would send a rescuer for his people, someone who would help them to love God again. Anna was sure she would meet this rescuer one day, and so was Simeon.



One day, the big Temple doors swung open, and in walked a couple carrying a little baby. This happened quite often as the custom was for parents to bring their little babies to the Temple to say a special thank you to God. Anna always loved to stop what she was doing and to welcome these little families. On this particular day, Mary and Joseph has brought baby Jesus to the Temple. He was only six weeks old. Mary had wrapped her baby in a warm shawl for the long journey to Jerusalem. I wonder if that faithful donkey had carried them along the way again?

‘Oh a little baby!’ said Anna. ‘How lovely.’

At that moment something amazing happened. Her old friend Simeon arrived at the Temple too. That morning, when he had been praying, he had just felt that he should go to the Temple. Old Simeon approached the young couple, looked closely at the tiny child and then took him in his arms.

‘He doesn’t usually do that,’ thought Anna in surprise.

A big smile came over Simeon’s face. ‘O God,’ he said, ‘you promised you would send somebody to rescue your people and now I have seen him. This little baby! He is a light to the world.’

Anna gasped. She saw it too. Here was the rescuer for whom she had waited such a long time. But, a baby! She hadn’t expected that! She smiled, and then she laughed, and then she had a cuddle of this special baby. And then she spent the rest of the day telling everyone else who came to the Temple all about Jesus! She didn’t get much else done that day!

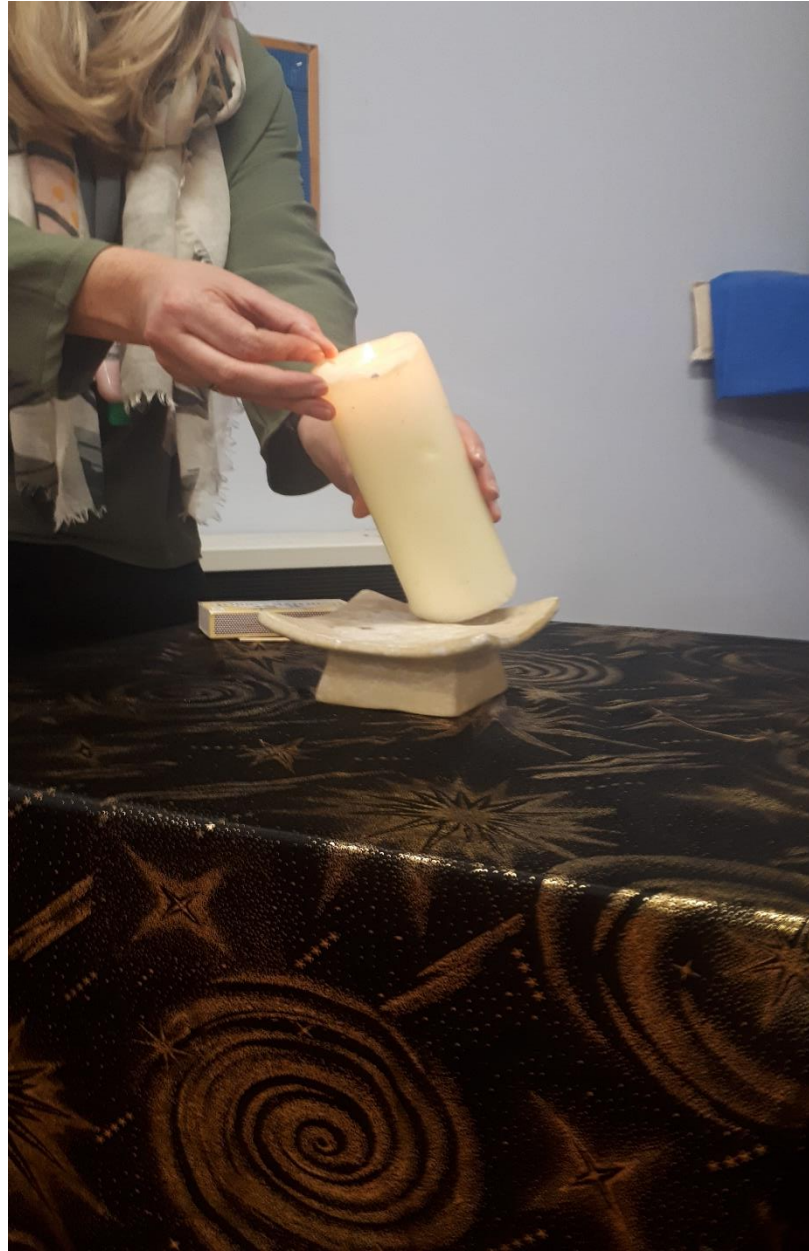


Where is Eva lighting a candle?

Eva is in the St Francis building



Where is Melanie lighting a candle ?



Melanie is in the hall.





Where is Elaine lighting a candle?

Elaine is lighting a candle in the chapel



‘Jesus, you are the light of the world.
May we live our lives as you taught,
so that your light will shine through us
in
all we say and do’.
Amen

How can you bring light to the
world ?