

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John Carlos,
Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ, February 2,
2020**

IMPROVING VISION

As the years go by our eyesight tends to weaken. We no longer see as well as we did when we were younger. While that is the case in our everyday life, that is not necessarily the case in our spiritual life. In fact, our spiritual vision can actually get better as we age. We certainly see that in this Sunday's Gospel for the Presentation of the Lord.

In the Gospel we hear how 40 days after the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph come to the Temple in Jerusalem. In accord with the law of Moses, they come to present their firstborn male child to the Lord, and Mary comes to offer the sacrifice required for her ritual purification.

Two people were able to recognize the infant Jesus, namely, Simeon and Anna had that sharp spiritual vision because as we read, they were righteous and devout, they were people of prayer and worship. It was their time with the Lord that gave them the spiritual vision to see the Messiah, to recognize Jesus, the Light of the World, that day in the Temple.

If we are to recognize the presence of Jesus in our lives, then like Simeon and Anna, we need to work at strengthening our spiritual vision. We need to spend time in prayer, we need to read the scriptures, we need to come to Mass, we need to be part of the Church, otherwise, our spiritual vision will become weak and blurry and we will fail to see the Lord in our lives and in our world.

That is certainly happening in our day. It is no coincidence that as Mass attendance has fallen, as people have moved away from prayer and from growing in the knowledge of their faith, the number of people identifying as atheists, agnostics, and of no religion has increased. Their spiritual vision has dimmed. They can no longer see the Lord.

Simeon and Anna would tell us that the more you pray, the more time you spend with God, the better your spiritual vision becomes!

United with you in mission, I am your servant and friend,

Father John Carlos