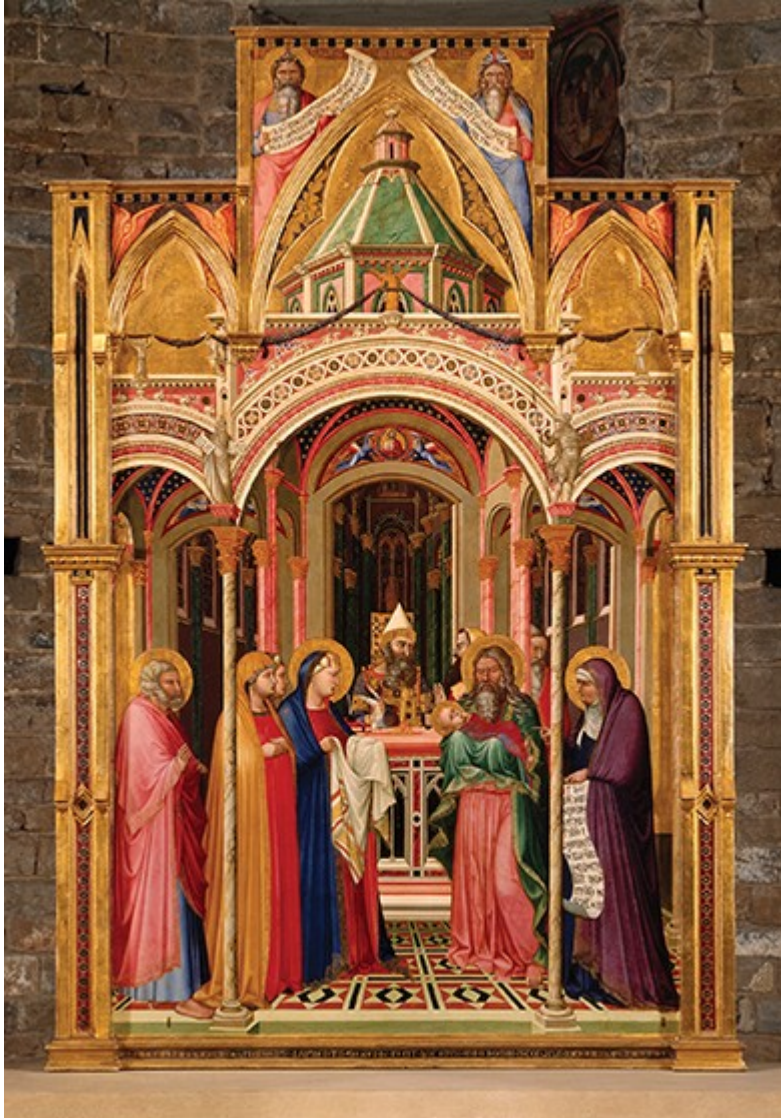


*Presentation in the Temple*, by Ambrogio Lorenzetti (fl. ca. 1311–1348)

Art selection and commentary by [Mikeal C. Parsons](#) and [Heidi J. Hornik](#)

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Ambrogio Lorenzetti created a profound visual interpretation of Jesus' presentation in the temple. The viewer's eyes (along with the eyes of most of the figures) are drawn to the character of Simeon, an older, bearded man, holding the Christ child in his arms. Mary holds the child's white blanket, but her attention is directed to the child. Two women behind her look at Simeon, the only figure whose clothing depicts

movement. Joseph seems to have just stopped a gesture with his hand. Likewise, the High Priest's sacrificial act is arrested. Just as Luke combined two separate rituals, the purification and the presentation, into a single event (2:22-40), so Ambrogio telescoped two separate elements in the narrative, Simeon's song (*Nunc Dimittis*) and Anna's prophecy, into a single epiphany. While Anna is holding her prophetic scroll (which begins with the words *et haec ipsa hora*, "at that moment"), Simeon opens his mouth to speak. For Ambrogio, his patrons and his audience, this event was not simply a historical moment preserved in time. The viewer is invited to proclaim with Simeon: "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation!"