

## **The Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord Jesus Christ. Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a,5-6 & Matt 2:1-2**

**Theme: God Continues to ask us to make known his Son, Jesus Christ to the world**

**T**he solemnity of the Epiphany of our Lord Jesus Christ that we celebrate today is considered to be one of the oldest in the Church and also one of the greatest in the ecclesiastical calendar year. Epiphany, a Greek word means a revelation or manifestation. The ancient Greeks used "Epiphany" to describe the appearance of a god among human beings. The Greek Church Fathers used it to explain the Incarnation of the Son of God to all nations. The celebration of the solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord should remind us all that God revealed his Son, Jesus Christ to us through his birth, baptism in the Jordan, Transfiguration, and throughout his earthly ministry.

St. Paul, in the Second reading, gives us the theological meaning of the solemnity of Epiphany of the Lord. Paul says God manifested himself in his Son Jesus Christ, not only to the Jews but also to all nations. By the grace of God, God has invited both Jews and Gentiles to benefit from the salvation brought by Jesus Christ. God's revelation in Jesus is for all his children.

Both the First and Gospel readings also highlight this solemnity we celebrate today. Prophet Isaiah praised the returning of the exiles from Babylon to restore the city. This passage/text is well known for its usage in the Roman Liturgy during the feast of Epiphany. The light the prophet proclaims to Zion symbolizes the blessings that will come to her namely, the glory of the Lord, the return of her children, the wealth of nations who themselves will walk by her light. In this prophecy, Isaiah envisions all nations would join this pilgrimage to the Light.

For St. Matthew and his Christian community, the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy can be found in Jesus Christ and his new Israel, the Church. The story of the Three Wisemen/Magi is unique to the gospel of Matthew. He tells us this Magi travelled several miles searching for the newborn King whose Star they saw in the East. When they found him, they presented him with the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold is a symbol of Jesus' kingship; frankincense reminds him of the importance of prayer for his mission; and the myrrh reminds him of his suffering, agony, and death that awaits him on the cross.

As his followers, these gifts given to Jesus are significant for us also. These gifts remind us also that we share in the kingship, priesthood, passion and death of Christ. So to be true disciples/Christians, we must be people of prayer and embrace our cross and follow Jesus every day.

We are blessed to have Jesus as our true Star to guide us through our journey here on earth into heaven. Like these Magi, we may get lost on our journey but with faith and trust in God, Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, God with Us will also lead us to his heavenly Father. God continues to ask us to make his Son Jesus Christ known to the whole world. The Magi, the apostles and early Christians have done their part. We are to continue from where they left off.

Our Bishop, the Most Rev. Mark E. Brennan in his Pastoral letter on Evangelization, invites us to make a personal evangelization as one of our topmost priorities in 2025. Through our bishop's invitation, we are making Jesus Christ known in our community.

I am very grateful to our Youth and the Choir for singing Christmas carols in our community. They have put smiles on the faces of many of our neighbors. They reminded our community that Jesus Christ is the main reason for the season of Christmas. Through our various ministries and organizations in our Parish, we are making Christ known in our community. Thanks to you all.

Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation, The Joy of the Gospel referenced Pope Benedict XVI: "Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction." As Roman Catholics we are blessed to encounter Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist and during Adoration of him in the Blessed Sacrament. We also encounter Jesus through Scripture and also through our various professions and ministries we're called to do. As always, let us ask our Holy Mother Mary and her beloved husband St. Joseph to intercede for us as we continue to make their Son, Jesus Christ known to the world.