

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come;
and kingship is in his grasp, and power and
dominion.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

COLLECT

O God, who on this day
revealed your Only Begotten Son to the nations
by the guidance of a star,
grant in your mercy, that we, who know you
already by faith,
may be brought to behold the beauty of your
sublime glory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING

Is 60:1-6

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.
Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light has
come,
the glory of the Lord is rising on you,
though night still covers the earth
and darkness the peoples.
Above you the Lord now rises
and above you his glory appears.
The nations come to your light
and kings to your dawning brightness.
Lift up your eyes and look round:
all are assembling and coming towards you,
your sons from far away
and your daughters being tenderly carried.
At this sight you will grow radiant,
your heart throbbing and full;
since the riches of the sea will flow to you,
the wealth of the nations come to you;
camels in throngs will cover you,
and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;
everyone in Sheba will come,
bringing gold and incense
and singing the praise of the Lord.
The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Ps 71 (72):1-2,7-8,10-13

Response:
All nations shall fall prostrate before you,
O Lord.

1. O God, give your judgement to the king,
to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice
and your poor in right judgement. (R.)
2. In his days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon fails.
He shall rule from sea to sea,
from the Great River to earth's bounds. (R.)
3. The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts
shall pay him tribute.
The kings of Sheba and Seba
shall bring him gifts.
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,
all nations shall serve him. (R.)
4. For he shall save the poor when they cry
and the needy who are helpless.
He will have pity on the weak
and save the lives of the poor. (R.)

SECOND READING

Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Ephesians

You have probably heard how I have been
entrusted by God with the grace he meant
for you, and that it was by a revelation that I
was given the knowledge of the mystery. This
mystery that has now been revealed through
the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets
was unknown to any men in past generations;
it means that pagans now share the same
inheritance, that they are parts of the same
body, and that the same promise has been
made to them, in Jesus Christ, through the
gospel.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!
We saw his star as it rose
and have come to do the Lord homage.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mt 2:1-12

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew.

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in
Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some
wise men came to Jerusalem from the east.
'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they
asked. 'We saw his star as it rose and have
come to do him homage.' When King Herod
heard this he was perturbed, and so was the
whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the
chief priests and the scribes of the people, and
enquired of them where the Christ was to be
born. 'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him
'for this is what the prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are by no means least among the leaders
of Judah,
for out of you will come a leader
who will shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see
him privately. He asked them the exact date on
which the star had appeared, and sent them
on to Bethlehem. 'Go and find out all about
the child,' he said 'and when you have found
him, let me know, so that I too may go and do
him homage.' Having listened to what the king
had to say, they set out. And there in front of
them was the star they had seen rising; it went
forward and halted over the place where the
child was. The sight of the star filled them with

delight, and going into the house they saw the
child with his mother Mary, and falling to their
knees they did him homage. Then, opening
their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold
and frankincense and myrrh. But they were
warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and
returned to their own country by a different way.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with
the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

(all bow during the next three lines)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the
Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,
the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored
and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and
apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness
of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the
dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Look with favour, Lord, we pray,
on these gifts of your Church,
in which are offered now not gold or
frankincense or myrrh,
but he who by them is proclaimed,
sacrificed and received, Jesus Christ.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

We have seen his star in the East,
and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Go before us with heavenly light, O Lord,
always and everywhere,
that we may perceive with clear sight
and revere with true affection
the mystery in which you have willed us to
participate.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Sunday Message

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD - SOLEMNITY

THE WORD

Year B • 7 January 2024 • Colour: White • Psalter Week 1

A GLOBAL FAMILY

MATTHEW 2:1-12



Being different can challenge us, upset our equilibrium, make us uncomfortable.

Thirty-five years ago, I was a young Redemptorist working in the Philippines. Sometimes in the town or in the countryside, I would be the only European around. I looked different, I drew attention, especially from children. They would stop and look. Sometimes they wanted to touch my skin, to feel the top of my nose. My hairy white arms and more aquiline nose intrigued them. It gave me a sense of what it's like to be different. An outsider.

The striking thing about Jesus was his attitude to others. Jesus was a master of welcome, generosity, accommodation, inclusion. The only people he couldn't deal with were those who thought they didn't need him - the sanctimonious and self-righteous ones. Jesus embraced everyone else, Jews like Zaccheaus who were marginalised because of their sinfulness or illness or lifestyle, as well as non-Jews, like the woman at the well, who were considered to be outside God's embrace. Prostitute, outcast, foreigner, sinner - it didn't matter to Jesus. All are part of God's family. God's Kingdom is open to everybody.

Today we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany. It is a feast of manifestation. God manifests himself to the whole world. The Magi, who come from the East in search of the newborn king of the Jews, represent the non-Jewish world. Jesus is made manifest to them. His birth is good news for Jews and non-Jews alike. It is good news for everyone.

The Epiphany reminds us that Jesus is Lord of all, and all are invited to follow and to worship him, as the Magi did. There are no obstacles of race or colour to overcome, no academic or work skills qualifications to meet, no immigration quotas or visa restrictions to negotiate, no hard borders or border walls to surmount, no treacherous seas to traverse. God's kingdom is open to all. One doesn't need to have a posh address or be from a 'good' family, or have robust health or a big bank balance, or be an expert in theology or even be able to read. It doesn't matter one's age, sex, ethnicity, or gender, God's Kingdom is open to everybody.

All that's required is to come to Jesus, as the Magi did. All we need to do is listen to the word of God and keep it. ■

DO

Visit the crib in your church. Reflect on the story of the Magi. Explain to your little ones what the story means.

PRAY

The 'wise ones' went searching for truth and happiness and found it in Jesus. Pray that people everywhere will discover Christ as their Lord and Saviour and pay him homage.

SAY

**"Lord, help me to seek you always.
Keep my eyes ever focused on you.
Amen."**

LEARN

The feast of the Epiphany celebrates how God's Son was revealed to the world

Jesus is the star we are called to follow
Today's feast reminds us that Jesus is Lord of all, and all are invited to follow him, as the Magi did

REFLECT

When the Magi follow the star to Jerusalem, they come seeking an answer to the question: "Where is the newborn king of the Jews?" At a time when populism and national and racial tensions are on the rise around the world, it is a question we need to hear now more than ever: Where is the newborn king of the Jews? Where do we see him? Do we follow him? Do we worship him?

The Magi had to search for him. They didn't discover him in a palace, among royalty, or in a mansion, among nobility. He wasn't where

they expected him to be. Instead, they found him in a shed, in the middle of nowhere, with only Mary and Joseph and a few domestic animals.

Jesus came into a world that didn't welcome him, and lived his first days in poverty and then as a refugee. The king of the Jews came into the world as an outsider, but his poverty and ordinariness didn't put off his august visitors from the East. Instead, they presented him with gifts fit for a royal. They knew who he was.

Jesus was born in poverty so that even the poorest could recognise him. The

astronomers from the East were guided to his crib so that even sophisticated outsiders could acknowledge him. The newborn came not just as king of the Jews but as Lord of all.

Today's feast challenges us to be constantly on the alert so that we will recognise Christ in all and in everything. Do you see Christ in everyone, especially the stranger, the foreigner, the other? What words do you use in speaking about the outsider? Are your words hospitable, inclusive and kind? Or are they judgemental, exclusive and cruel?

The Lord of all welcomes all. ■