

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



Make Us Magi

Lord of heaven and earth,
having made known your plan of salvation,
you now send us to live and share the Gospel.
To those who yearn to penetrate the
darkness
and to walk by your light, make us Magi.
Make us people who testify to the light,

who stand fast in the face of fear
and hostility,
who bow down in your presence,
and who set our gifts before you.
Make us Magi.
Make us resolute witnesses, living signs,
and true worshippers.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, January 5, 2020

We Must Be Magi



Today's Readings: Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13; Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6; Matthew 2:1-12. Today we hear how God's light will radiate from his sacred city, Jerusalem, drawing to it the eyes and then the people of every nation on earth. Jews scattered during foreign invasions will return to their homeland. Gentiles, including kings, will join them, bringing incense to burn and animals to offer. They will build up the Temple and praise the Lord, the one true God.

The Magi were Gentiles who looked up and saw a great light. They set forth toward it, bringing gifts to offer, but their path did not lead to Jerusalem. It led instead to Bethlehem, a tiny village. No one at all joined them. The small house they entered was nothing like the Temple. And

the only king they encountered, King Herod, wanted the star they followed to darken and disappear.

Nevertheless, when the Magi presented their gifts and prostrated themselves, the prophecy of our first reading began to be fulfilled. In humble surroundings, God's plan of salvation was at last revealed. This plan did not unfold in the way people expected, but then God usually fulfills his promises in ways that startle and even frighten us.

Despite the fear and hostility they encountered, the Magi followed the light and venerated the Lord. We must be like them. We must be Magi. We must move toward the light, bearing witness and paying homage to the Lord who has come among us.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, January 6

A Great Light

The crowds that flock to Jesus are drawn to his light. They recognize that, in Jesus, truth and goodness walk among them. By healing and casting out demons Jesus incarnates God's kingdom; he brings it about in the midst of the people. Today he shares his Spirit with all who follow him so that we might be healed of whatever afflicts us and remain with God forever. Make a list of things that cause people to suffer. Use this list to pray for healing and peace in our world. *Today's Readings: 1 John 3:22—4:6; Psalm 2:7bc–8, 10–12a; Matthew 4:12–17, 23–25.*

Tuesday, January 7

Hungers

Today we again hear how Jesus incarnates God's love, this time by feeding a large crowd. Everyone in the crowd faced the constant threat of hunger. Their crops could fail or their land could be taken from them. Jesus' gift of bread points to life in God's kingdom, where no one will ever hunger again. Share God's love today by volunteering at a food pantry or homeless shelter. *Today's Readings: 1 John 4:7–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 3–4, 7–8; Mark 6:34–44.*

Wednesday, January 8

Fears

In the ancient world, the sea represented death. The chaotic waters of the sea reminded people of the vast, dark emptiness that preceded God's creation. Jesus reveals his divine power over death by walking effortlessly across the surface of the sea. However, his disciples, easily frightened by stormy waters, become fearful of the one who strides across them. They are imperfect in their love for Jesus. We, too, might be amazed by what God has done yet hesitate to entrust ourselves to our Savior. Talk with God about what keeps you from drawing closer to him. *Today's Readings: 1 John 4:11–18; Psalm 72:1–2, 10, 12–13; Mark 6:45–52.*

Thursday, January 9

Lighten the Load

Some days we may doubt that our faith will triumph over evil. We may struggle to believe that virtuous behavior enacted in patience, mercy, and humility will prevail over sin. At such times, obeying God's commandment to love others might feel burdensome. Yet the weight bearing down on us is the pain or anger we cling to instead of welcoming the freedom that Jesus proclaims and shares with us. Embrace the freedom Christ offers us by praying St. Ignatius of Loyola's *Suscipe*. *Today's Readings: 1 John 4:19–5:4; Psalm 72:1–2, 14 and 15bc, 17; Luke 4:14–22a.*

Friday, January 10

New Life

Leprosy forced people to leave their families and community. A leper's isolation must have felt like a living death. Therefore, Jesus didn't only heal the leper physically, he also restored to him the life he had lost. The leper's new physical life points to the eternal life that God's Son offers everyone who believes in him. Draw a picture or imagine what life was like for the leper both before and after he met Jesus. Reflect on how Jesus has changed your life. *Today's Readings: 1 John 5:5–13; Psalm 147:12–13, 14–15, 19–20; Luke 5:12–16.*

Saturday, January 11

Our Testimony

Today we hear the end of two testimonies. The First Letter of John, written so that we will enter into fellowship with God, concludes by urging us to remain in the truth. In the Gospel passage, John the Baptist points once again to Jesus before stepping out of the spotlight. Both testimonies direct our attention to God's Son and through him, to the Father. Both testimonies warn us to withstand whatever tempts us to separate ourselves from God. Renew your baptismal promises today as a way of showing your rejection of evil and your commitment to God. *Today's Readings: 1 John 5:14–21; Psalm 149:1–2, 3–4, 5 and 6a and 9b; John 3:22–30.*

