

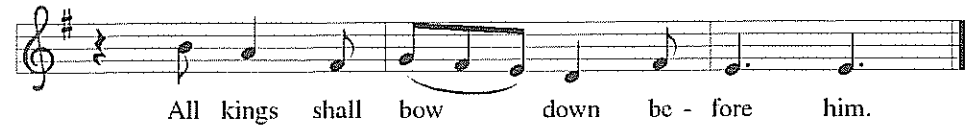
# Celebrate

Epiphany of Our Lord

January 6, 2019

Psalms

Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14; refrain, Ps. 72:11



*Epiphany means "manifestation." On this day we celebrate the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles—that is, to all nations. Some Christian traditions celebrate three great epiphanies on this day: the magi's adoration of the Christ child, Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, and his first miracle in which he changes water into wine. The word and sacraments are for us the great epiphany of God's grace and mercy. We go forth to witness to the light that shines brightly in our midst.*

## Prayer of the Day

O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## First Reading

Isaiah 60:1-6

*Jerusalem is assured that nations will make a pilgrimage to her, because the light of God's presence is in her midst. The bountiful food of the sea and the profits of international trade will come streaming to Jerusalem and thereby declare God's praise.*

Arise, shine; for your light has come,  
and the glory of the LORD has risen  
upon you.

<sup>2</sup>For darkness shall cover the earth,  
and thick darkness the peoples;  
but the LORD will arise upon you,  
and his glory will appear over you.

<sup>3</sup>Nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your  
dawn.

<sup>4</sup>Lift up your eyes and look around;  
they all gather together, they come  
to you;

your sons shall come from far away,  
and your daughters shall be carried  
on their nurses' arms.

<sup>5</sup>Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,  
because the abundance of the sea shall  
be brought to you,  
the wealth of the nations shall come  
to you.

<sup>6</sup>A multitude of camels shall cover you,  
the young camels of Midian and  
Ephah;

all those from Sheba shall come.  
They shall bring gold and  
frankincense,  
and shall proclaim the praise of the  
LORD.

Give the king your jus-<sup>1</sup> tice, O God,  
and your righteousness to <sup>1</sup> the king's son;  
<sup>2</sup>that he may rule your <sup>1</sup> people righteously  
and the <sup>1</sup> poor with justice;  
<sup>3</sup>that the mountains may bring prosperity <sup>1</sup> to the people,  
and the <sup>1</sup> hills, in righteousness.  
<sup>4</sup>Let him defend the needy a- <sup>1</sup> mong the people,  
rescue the poor, and crush <sup>1</sup> the oppressor. **R**  
<sup>5</sup>May he live as long as the sun and <sup>1</sup> moon endure,  
from one generation <sup>1</sup> to another.  
<sup>6</sup>Let him come down like rain upon <sup>1</sup> the mown field,  
like showers that wa- <sup>1</sup> ter the earth.  
<sup>7</sup>In his time may the <sup>1</sup> righteous flourish;  
and let there be an abundance of peace  
till the moon shall <sup>1</sup> be no more.  
<sup>10</sup>May the kings of Tarshish and of the <sup>1</sup> isles pay tribute,  
and the kings of Sheba and Seba <sup>1</sup> offer gifts. **R**  
<sup>11</sup>May all kings bow <sup>1</sup> down before him,  
and all the nations <sup>1</sup> do him service.  
<sup>12</sup>For the king delivers the poor who cry out <sup>1</sup> in distress,  
the oppressed, and those who <sup>1</sup> have no helper.  
<sup>13</sup>He has compassion on the low- <sup>1</sup> ly and poor,  
and preserves the lives <sup>1</sup> of the needy.  
<sup>14</sup>From oppression and violence he re- <sup>1</sup> deems their lives,  
and precious is their blood <sup>1</sup> in his sight. **R**

What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

## Gospel

## Matthew 2:1-12

God's promise shines bright in the night as magi follow a star to honor a new king. Strangers from a faraway land, they welcome the long-awaited messiah of Israel.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.

Dwelling in the presence of God with us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all in any need.

A brief silence.

Drawn into the light of God, we pray for the proclamation of the grace of Jesus Christ. Give us courage and boldness to go forth into the world to tell the good news of what God has done. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Drawn into the glory of creation, we pray for the earth. Sustain every living thing with abundant resources, clean water, and sustainable harvests. Help us to steward all that you have provided. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Drawn into the brightness of God's presence, we pray for the nations of the world. Reveal your compassion and peace for the sake of all who live in the shadow of oppression, violence, and fear. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Drawn into the light of healing mercy, we pray for all who wait for healing and relief of suffering (especially). Give us hope in the promise of new life where pain and suffering will be no more. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Drawn into the dawn of a new day, we pray for the ongoing reconciliation between people. Make us bold to name sin in our lives and unite us in the promise of forgiveness and mercy. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Drawn into the promise of everlasting light, we pray for those who mourn and give thanks for all the saints who now rest in the brightness of God's presence (especially). Make us confident in our worship as we reflect the light of God with eternal praise. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Trusting in the presence of God by the power of the Holy Spirit, we commend all for whom we pray, dwelling in the light and hope of Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

## Preparing for Next Week

**Monday** Ephesians 4:17—5:1. **Tuesday** Ephesians 5:15-20. **Wednesday** Luke 1:67-79. **Thursday** Psalm 29. **Friday** 1 Corinthians 2:1-10. **Saturday** Ecclesiastes 3:1-15. **Baptism of Our Lord** Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22.

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