

SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



People of Light

O radiant God, source of all life,
your love for us is so great that you sent
Jesus, the Light of Lights,
to scatter the darkness of sin and doubt.
The Magi, seeing a brilliant shining star,
set out to find the King of Kings and the
Lord of Lords,
only to find him, not in a palace,
but in the home of Mary and Joseph.
Teach us to seek your Son with courageous
and humble hearts,
to see him in the poor and marginalized,
and in all who have lost hope.
Make us a people of light and justice,
ready to serve you and offer you praise,
and ready to proclaim the glory of Christ.
Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that the radiance of your Incarnate Word
break into our hearts and shower upon all
the nations,
so that justice will flourish among your
people and peace govern all the earth.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, January 3, 2016

Revealing Light



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. The Epiphany celebrates God's manifestation to all nations. Though we are familiar with the story of the three wise men and the song "We Three Kings," how well do we consider what the Scriptures tell us today?

In the First Reading, the prophet demands that Jerusalem rise up; God has delivered the people from their misfortune and restored the city, bathing it in light. The phrase, "nations shall come to your light" (verse 3), shows that God's glory is revealed in this thriving city and its renewed people. In the Gospel, magi from the east (representing different cultures and places) seek the Christ child.

They follow a star because their faith has led them to pursue truth. Upon seeing Jesus, they pay him homage. This story reveals that Jesus has come to save all people, but it also tells us that Christ's manifestation transforms the way we see one another. Christ is at the center of our relationships and uses our diverse gifts to reveal the Father.

In Baptism, bathed with the light of Christ, we are delivered from our misfortune and brought into the Body of Christ. We are no longer a people of darkness; like Jerusalem, we must let our light shine. We are now partners with Christ and our lives must reflect his presence, proclaim justice to the poor, and release to the captives.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, January 4, 2016

Memorial of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Verse 23 of the First Letter of John summarizes the core theological theme of the letter—we must believe and we must love one another. St. Elizabeth also reminds us of these two themes. Her faith led her to share her gifts and resources with those less fortunate. She discerned, as John asks us to (4:1), where God was calling her so she may labor for the kingdom. Take a moment today to pray for an increase in faith and a robust love so that you too may do God's will. *Today's Readings:* 1 John 3:22—4:6; Psalm 2:7bc–8, 10–12a; Matthew 4:12–17, 23–25.

Tuesday, January 5, 2016

Memorial of St. John Neumann, Bishop

God is love, as today's First Reading states. We hear this phrase a lot, but have we thought about what it says to us? In this Christmas season, we celebrate God's amazing gift of his Son, Jesus, who reveals God's love in the flesh. If we are born in Christ and he dwells within each of us, we must each ask ourselves, "Do I love like Christ?" God's love reveals peace, justice, compassion, and mercy. Today, consider scheduling a visit to a sick person or a homeless shelter and be present to those on the margins. *Today's Readings:* 1 John 4:7–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 3–4, 7–8; Mark 6:34–44.

Wednesday, January 6, 2016

Heart of Christ

It's awesome to think that God's love transforms us to be more like God. Love is radical. It challenges us to see with the eyes of Christ and set aside our fears and misunderstandings. When our lives are rooted in Christ, we are no longer possessed by fear or judgment but remain in God. What stops you from loving as Christ loves? How are you drawing people to the heart of Christ? *Today's Readings:* 1 John 4:11–18; Psalm 72:1–2, 10, 12–13; Mark 6:45–52.

Thursday, January 7, 2016

Radical Love

Can you say, "I love God"? Some people are afraid or uncomfortable with the word *love*, perhaps because of its many connotations in our culture. Our narrative continues today to help us understand the love of Christ. Because we are anointed in Christ, we too are called "to bring good news to the poor [and] proclaim release to the captives." Again, love is radical; it demands that we act with justice and truth. We cannot be afraid to show Christ's love to the world. Light a candle today and say a prayer for all those unable to love or receive love. *Today's Readings:* 1 John 4:19—5:4; Psalm 72:1–2, 14 and 15bc, 17; Luke 4:14–22a.

Friday, January 8, 2016

Healing

Today's Gospel presents Jesus as healer. As we approach the final days of Christmas, it is important to reflect once again on God's saving deed. Jesus' healing of the leper proclaims the Reign of God. It is a sign of God's love and mercy. Healing is a miracle that reminds us that Christ saves us. Biblical scholar John Pilch writes that Christ's healing draws us from the margins and reincorporates us into the community. Who needs healing in your community? Invite your children or nieces and nephews to make greeting cards for those on the margins who need a sign of God's hope. *Today's Readings:* 1 John 5:5–13; Psalm 147:12–13, 14–15, 19–20; Luke 5:12–16.

Saturday, January 9, 2016

Increase/Decrease

Do you rejoice when you hear the voice of Jesus, the bridegroom? In the Gospel, John the Baptist realizes that his ministry is ending and Jesus' ministry will grow and reveal the kingdom. John rejoices in the Lord! Like him, we must set ourselves aside so that the light of Christ can shine from us. *Today's Readings:* 1 John 5:14–21; Psalm 149:1–2, 3–4, 5–6a and 9b; John 3:22–30.

