

# Sunday, January 6, 2019

## The Epiphany of the Lord

### Meditation and Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion

#### Mass Readings:

1st Reading     Isaiah 60:1-6

2nd Reading:     Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6

Responsorial:     Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-13

Gospel:             Matthew 2:1-12

### Reflecting God's Love and Care in Our Love and Care for Our Parents

*They saw the child. (Matthew 2:11)*

An epiphany is a sudden realization about the nature or meaning of something. The birth of a child can be an epiphany that suddenly makes us understand love and responsibility in a new way. A doctor's warning about health issues can be an epiphany that causes us to change the way we eat. And a Scripture passage, homily, or spiritual book can be an epiphany that helps us see Jesus in an unexpected, new way.

The Greek word epiphania means "manifestation." Today, on Epiphany Sunday, we celebrate how God manifested his glory to the Magi. First, they saw a star and chose to follow it all the way to Jesus. Second, when they found Jesus, the Magi knelt down to worship him and pay him homage. Third, the Magi went home changed.

This pattern can be the same for your life. God visits the earth on a daily basis. You might say he never left! Every day he stands at the door of your heart and asks, "Can I come in?" (Revelation 3:20). The Magi didn't have to follow the star. They chose to follow the star. You have the same choice to open the door to God.

When the Magi saw Jesus' divinity, they worshipped him. Today, while you are at Mass, let the divinity of Christ move you to worship. Contemplate who Jesus is and all that he has done for you. Kneel before him—baby in a manger or Savior on a cross—and let joy and gratitude fill you, just as the Magi experienced.

Finally, the Magi were changed by what they saw. We know they changed routes to avoid Herod. But even more, imagine how hard it was for them to go home and return to "normal." They had seen the glory of God, and nothing would be the same again!

Your life can be changed by this very pattern: seeing and worshipping Jesus and receiving a new insight from the Spirit will always improve the way you think, act, and relate to other people.

*"Lord, I ask you for an epiphany today. Jesus, help me see you anew."*

(Many thanks to *The Word Among Us* ([www.wau.org](http://www.wau.org)) for allowing us to use meditations from their monthly devotional magazine. Used with permission.)

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**Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion:**

1. The first reading begins with these uplifting and prophetic words regarding the coming of Christ: *Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you. See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; but upon you the LORD shines, and over you appears his glory. Nations shall walk by your light, and kings by your shining radiance. Raise your eyes and look about; they all gather and come to you: your sons come from afar, and your daughters in the arms of their nurses. It ends with these words: Then you shall be radiant at what you see, your heart shall throb and overflow, for the riches of the sea shall be emptied out before you, the wealth of nations shall be brought to you. Caravans of camels shall fill you, dromedaries from Midian and Ephah; all from Sheba shall come bearing gold and frankincense, and proclaiming the praises of the LORD.*
  - How would you describe the ways that the coming of Jesus (“the light of the world”) has fulfilled these words?
  - How do the words of the reading affect your own faith in Jesus and his coming into the world? In what ways do they fill you with the faith and hope in Jesus that these Scriptures reflect?
  - What are some new steps you can take in 2019 to increase your faith and hope in the Lord?
2. The Responsorial Psalm is also a prophetic word on the coming of Jesus. and they speak of a king endowed by God to “govern your people with justice and your afflicted ones with judgment,” and “Justice shall flower in his days.” The psalm ends with these words: *For he shall rescue the poor when he cries out, and the afflicted when he has no one to help him. He shall have pity for the lowly and the poor; the lives of the poor he shall save.*
  - In what ways has Jesus fulfilled these words?
  - In what ways have the Church, and you personally, tried to fulfill the ending words of the psalm?
  - In 2019, how can you share in this work of Jesus in an even greater way?
3. The second reading opens with these words of St. Paul: *Brothers and sisters: You have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for your benefit, namely, that the mystery was made known to me by revelation. It was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. The reading ends by describing what this great mystery is: that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*
  - What does it mean to you that you are now a coheir and copartner with the Jewish people *in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel*?
  - In what ways do you believe you are called to be a witness of Christ's love to your Jewish brothers and sisters? How are you doing?
  - How often do you pray for Jewish people whom you know, and for all the Jewish people, that they may one day come to know Jesus as their Messiah and Lord? Are there some specific people that you can start praying for now?
4. In the Gospel, there is a great contrast between King Herod's reaction when the Magi inquired of the whereabouts of the newborn king of the Jews and the Magi's reaction to finding Jesus. King Herod was *greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. The Magi were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*
  - Why do you think there was such a great contrast in King Herod's and the Magi's reactions?
  - What is your reaction to this reading? In what way is it similar to the Magi? In what way is it not similar?
5. The meditation describes several ways the Magi's lives were affected by the “epiphany” and the impact they can have on our own lives: (1) *The Magi didn't have to follow the star. They chose to follow the star. You have the same choice to open the door to God.* (2) *When the Magi saw Jesus' divinity, they worshipped him. Today, while you are at Mass, let the divinity of Christ move you to worship. Contemplate who Jesus is and all that he has done for you. Kneel before him—baby in a manger or Savior on a cross—and let joy and gratitude fill you, just as the Magi experienced.* (3) *the Magi were changed by what they saw. We know they changed routes to avoid Herod. But even more, imagine how hard it was for them to go home and return to “normal.” They had seen the glory of God, and nothing would be the same again! Your life can be changed by this very pattern: seeing and worshipping Jesus and receiving a new insight from the Spirit will always improve the way you think, act, and relate to other people.*
  - In what ways do these words of the meditation apply to your own life?
  - How can you put these words into action in a deeper and new way in 2019?

**Take some time now to pray and ask the Lord for a deeper “epiphany” of Jesus, including his divinity, his glory, and “all that he has done for you.” Use the prayer below from the end of the meditation as the starting point.**

***“Lord, I ask you for an epiphany today. Jesus, help me see you anew.”***

[The discussion questions were created by Maurice Blumberg, who is currently a member of the board of directors of the ChristLife Catholic Ministry for Evangelization ([www.christlife.org](http://www.christlife.org)), a member of the National Service Committee Council of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal ([www.nsc-chariscenter.org](http://www.nsc-chariscenter.org)), and a board member of The Love of Christ Foundation. Prior to this, Maurice was the founding executive director of the National fellowship of Catholic Men, a chairman of the board of *The Word Among Us* ([www.wau.org](http://www.wau.org)), and a director of partner relations for The Word Among Us Partners ministry. He can be contacted at [mblumberg@wau.org](mailto:mblumberg@wau.org) or [mblumberg@aol.com](mailto:mblumberg@aol.com).]