

January 7, 2018  
Epiphany of the Lord  
Cycle B

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Isaiah 60: 1 – 6.

*God's bright glory has risen for us.*

Psalm 72:1 – 2, 7 – 8, 10 – 11, 12 – 13.

*Lord every nation on earth will adore you.*

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: Ephesians 3:2 – 3a, 5 – 6.

*God's plan includes everyone, and God makes it clear.*

Gospel: Matthew 2:1 – 12.

*Gentiles saw His star at its rising and followed it to do Him homage.*

God is good, **all the time**. All the time, **God is good**.

Happy Epiphany! This feast is also explained as the manifestation of Christ to the Gentile world. Jesus did not become incarnate just for the Jews, but for all of humankind. It is perhaps one of the two or three most illustrated events in icons, poems, songs and legends, but what does it all mean: Christmas is more than giving gifts to our new born king, it is looking up at the light and following the call and direction of God, it is letting go of our will for the greater good of the world. What does it all mean?

Last week we had Luke's infancy narrative of the birth of Jesus, today we get Matthew's one sentence: "After Jesus was born in Bethlehem village, Judah territory – this was during Herod's kingship – a band of scholars arrived in Jerusalem from the East. We observed a star in the eastern sky that signaled his birth. We're on pilgrimage to worship him." That's it, no angels, no manger, no shepherds, just scholars from the East on a pilgrimage to pay homage and give gifts. What does this mean?

In his Epiphany homily in 2013 Pope Francis envisioned a clearer Epiphany as he stated, "In a world where there is so much wealth, so many resources to feed everyone, it is unfathomable that there are so many hungry children, that there are so many children without an education, so many poor persons.

Poverty today is a cry. We all have to think if we can become a little poorer, all of us have to do this.”

Could this be our gift? To share our abundance so that those who have none might have something? To recognize everyone as our brother and sister. To build a better more equitable world.

As the Christmas season draws to a close, we reflect not so much on the birth of Jesus as on the impact that birth had on all those who heard of it – the shepherds, the magi, the villagers, and us. By assuming our human reality, God shows us how to move beyond our ordinary routines into lives that can truly make a difference in our homes, schools, community, and world.

The pilgrimage of the magi to visit the Holy Family was a sign that our Christ had come not only for the people of Bethlehem and Jerusalem, but for the people of Kalamazoo and the entire world in all times and all places. It stands as a reminder that we are called to be ever more inclusive, to be open to questions from all those who seek the love and mercy and the peace of the reign of God. We are all called to be more, to accept and grow into our divinity.

We are challenged to, as Isaiah puts it, “Get out of bed, Wake up, Put our faces in the sunlight, because God’s bright glory has risen for us.” LOOK! PAY ATTENTION! Jesus comes to us now, today, in lowly bread and ordinary St. Julian wine. Let us give homage to Jesus!

God is good, **all the time**. All the time, **God is good**.