

**FIRST READING**

The glory of the Lord shines upon you.

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

60:1-6

**J**erusalem, stand up and shine!

Your new day is dawning.

And the glory of the Lord shines brightly on you.

The earth and its people are covered with darkness,  
but the glory of the Lord is shining over you.

Nations and kings will come to the light of your dawning day.

Open your eyes and look around!

Crowds are on their way.

Your sons are coming from distant lands,

and your daughters are being carried like young children.

When you see this, your faces will glow.

Your hearts will beat fast and swell with pride.

Treasures from over the sea

and the wealth of nations will be brought to you.

Your country will be covered with caravans of young camels  
from Midian and Ephah.

And the people of Sheba will bring gold and spices  
in praise of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM**

72:1, 2, 10abc, 10de-11

*R. (see 11) Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.*

Please help the king  
to be honest and fair  
just like you, our God.

*R. Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.*

Let him be honest and fair  
with all your people,  
especially the poor.

*R. Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.*

Force the rulers of Tarshish  
and of the islands  
to pay taxes to him.

*R. Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.*

Make the kings of Sheba  
and of Seba bring gifts.  
Make other rulers bow down  
and all nations serve him.

*R. Lord, every nation on earth will adore you.*

## **ALLELUIA**

Matthew 2:2

*R. Alleluia, alleluia.*

We have seen his star in the east  
And have come to adore the Lord.

*R. Alleluia, alleluia.*

## **GOSPEL**

We have come from the east to worship the king.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

2:1-12

**W**hen Jesus was born in the village of Bethlehem in Judea,  
Herod was king.

During this time some wise men from the east came to Jerusalem and said,  
“Where is the child born to be king of the Jews?  
We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”

When King Herod heard about this, he was worried,  
and so was everyone else in Jerusalem.  
Herod brought together all the chief priests and the teachers  
of the Law of Moses and asked them,  
“Where will the Messiah be born?”

They told him,  
"He will be born in Bethlehem, just as the prophet wrote,

"Bethlehem in the land of Judea,  
you are very important among the towns of Judea.  
From your town will come a leader,  
who will be like a shepherd for my people Israel."

Herod secretly called in the wise men  
and asked them when they had first seen the star.  
He told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child.  
As soon as you find him, let me know.  
I want to go and worship him too."

The wise men listened to what the king said and then left.  
And the star they had seen in the east went on ahead of them  
until it stopped over the place where the child was.  
They were thrilled and excited to see the star.

When the men went into the house  
and saw the child with Mary, his mother,  
they knelt down and worshiped him.  
They took out their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh  
and gave them to him.  
Later they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod,  
And they went back home by another road.

The gospel of the Lord.

## Epiphany

### Prayer:

Loving God,

Thank you for the gift of Jesus, the light of our lives. Help us to continually offer our gifts to you. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen

### Readings:

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalm 72:1,2,10abc, 10de-11

Matthew 2:1-12

### Reflection:

Today is the feast of Epiphany which is the celebration of God coming into our lives. The gospel tells the story of the Three Wisemen and their journey to see the new king, baby Jesus. Try to imagine that you are one of the Wisemen. You see a new star in the sky that outshines all of the other stars. You know in your heart that this star must be shining for a very special event – a new king. You don't know where this new king is or anything else about him but you leave your home anyway to follow the star. You bring with you the most precious gift that you have to give to the new king. When you arrive you find a poor mother and father with a baby. (Discuss Questions 1 – 4). Those Wisemen must have been very brave to follow a star to an unknown place and to bring precious gifts for someone they didn't even know.

Believe it or not, this story happens to us over and over every day. We ARE the Wisemen. We experience little epiphanies (God coming into our lives) all the time, for example, when we see a beautiful flower, a rainbow, a friendly smile or feel the love of our parent's arms around us. God has also sent many stars to guide us. Our parents, teachers, priests and other religious, friends, animals, plants, books, and music are some of the things that can help guide us to God. Like the Wisemen, we bring gifts to offer to God. The great part is that God is happy with any of our gifts that we offer. We do not have to bring gold, frankincense and myrrh; we merely have to offer something of ourselves. (Discuss questions 5 – 7).

### Discussion:

Ask the children to pretend they are one of the Wisemen.

1. Why do you want to follow this star?
2. How do you feel about leaving your home to travel to somewhere you don't know?
3. Why do you want to bring the new king a gift?
4. How do you feel when you first see the Baby Jesus?

Ask the children to answer these questions personally

5. How do you see God in your life each day? What reminds you that God is with you?
6. Who or what is a star guiding you to God each day?
7. What gifts do you have to offer to God?

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**Activity: Gifts for God.**

Materials needed: Small boxes, 3 x 5 pieces of paper, markers/crayons, gift bows, wrapping paper, tape, gift tags, the book, "The Littlest Angel" or the movie "The Little Drummer Boy."

Show the ending of the movie "The Little Drummer Boy" or tell/read the highlights of the book, "The Littlest Angel."

Instruct the children to draw on the 3x5 paper, a picture of their gift to the baby Jesus. Have them insert the pictures into a small box, wrap it, decorate with a bow and place a gift tag (To Jesus, From [the child's name]).

Tell them to take the gift home and keep it by their beds to remind them each night and each morning to thank God for the many gifts they have been given and to offer to God a gift of their own.