

Suggested Opening Song: The First Nowell, #176

Today we commemorate the day when Jesus Christ was made manifest to the wider world. The magi, who were not Jewish and not from that region, were guided by the star, which eventually led them to Bethlehem. There they paid him homage and offered their finest treasures as gifts. In many cultures and traditions, today is the day Christians travel to be with loved ones and exchange gifts, often celebrating Epiphany as the high point of the Christmas season, for it marks the manifestation of the Lord to the whole world.

As we gather let us begin our service by professing what we believe.

Profession of Faith p. 144

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (bow as we say) and by the Holy Spirit he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Introductory Rite:

Greeting:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be God forever. **Blessed be God forever.**

Penitential Rite: p. 12

Brothers and sisters, let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to participate in this sacred celebration.

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen**

Opening Prayer:

O God, who on this day revealed your Only Begotten Son to the nation by the guidance of a star, grant in your mercy that we, who know you already by faith, may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Liturgy of the Word:

First Reading p. 80

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Isaiah 60:1-6

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.

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm

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

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

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

O God, with your judgment endow the king, and with your justice, the king's son;
He shall govern your people with justice and your afflicted ones with judgment. **R/.**

Justice shall flower in his days, and profound peace, till the moon be no more.
May he rule from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. **R/.**

The kings of Tarshish and the Isles shall offer gifts; the kings of Arabia and Seba shall bring tribute.
All kings shall pay him homage, all nations shall serve him. **R/.**

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. **R/.**

Second Reading

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6

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: that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Matthew 2:1-12

Glory to you, O Lord

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet:

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

Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage." After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection on the Word:

- When Isaiah proclaimed the words we hear today, God's chosen people had just returned to Judah after sixty years of exile in Babylon. The city of Jerusalem was in ruins, the temple had been destroyed, and many of its families had not survived or were still lost. Picture the devastation after a city or region is heavily bombed during a war. "Rise up in splendor," was aspirational at best, unimaginable to most (Isaiah 60:1). Yet Isaiah insists that Jerusalem's light was not only possible, but had already come. Isaiah was able to see God's glory amidst destruction and squalor, as the shepherds and magi could see a king and Messiah in a wooden trough, as we are challenged to see peace, justice, and hope in a world with wars, injustices, and despair. We can choose to try to see through God's eyes, as Isaiah and the magi did.
- Herod, awarded the title "King of the Jews" by the Roman Senate, was understandably perturbed to hear from the magi that somewhere there was a "newborn king of the Jews" (Matthew 2:2). This baby was a threat to his power. But Matthew tells us that "all Jerusalem" was troubled by this development as well (2:3). Why would the people of Jerusalem be troubled? Herod was tyrannical, murderous, and not particularly religious in the first place. But then as well as now, those who surrounded him valued their proximity to power and tended to support him no matter what. Herod likely regarded his sycophants and others he regularly interacted with as "all Jerusalem," saw his worries and concerns projected onto them, and concluded the entire populace was upset. To him, they were.
- The Jubilee Year, "Pilgrims of Hope," ends this Tuesday on the traditional date of Epiphany. Epiphany celebrates the manifestation of God's Son to the whole world. This year, Epiphany reminds us that we are called to manifest Christian hope—the hope of God's kingdom, of our redemption, of eternal life—to a world often in despair. May we be manifestations of Christ's presence in what we believe and in all that we do.

Question of the Week

What will I do this week to manifest the presence of Christ in me to others?

Prayer of the Faithful:

Bound together by Christ's love with all Christians around the world, we pray for the needs of all.

- That we the Church may shine the light of Christ upon the darknesses of all those in need, from here in our own communities to the ends of the earth, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- That world leaders may welcome the light of God's glory, revealing those in need who are otherwise relegated to the shadows, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For those who are searching for hope, for meaning, or for something they cannot find in their lives, that the light of Christ may lead them to what they need, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For refugees, migrants, and those seeking asylum, that they may be kept safe and warm in God's tender care, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For all those who are traveling during the Christmas holidays, that they may find joy at their destination and may return home safely, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For what else should we pray? Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For all the prayers that we hold in the silence of our hearts; for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

God of light, the light of the Christmas star guided the magi to your Son. Keep our eyes focused on the light that never fades as you grant the prayers we make, through the one whose birth we celebrate this season, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer: p. 180

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Rite of Peace:

The sign of peace outwardly expresses a deep spiritual reality; through this sign we acknowledge Christ's presence in each other and share the peace we have received from Him. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Communion:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

The body of Christ. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion:

Go before us with heavenly light, O Lord, always and everywhere, that we may perceive with clear sight and revere with true affection the mystery in which you have willed us to participate.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Concluding Rite:

Final Blessing:

May the Lord bless us, ✠ protect us from all evil and lead us to everlasting life. **Amen**

Go in peace! **Thanks be to God.**

Suggested Closing Song: We Three Kings, #179