

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” (Matthew 2: 1-2)

What's the deal? We arrived back here in Mesa on Monday afternoon spending time in California with our family, and the first thing I noticed was that Christmas was over and gone. I mean there was no Christmas to be seen on any of the yards as everyone appears to have put Christmas away... that is except for us. I was proud to see that my Merry Christmas Jesus thingy, our blow-up nativity scene was still visible from a block away. YES! That thingy seems to be serving its purpose declaring Jesus Christ is born!

However, today, Wednesday, is the official end of the 12 days of Christmas. This is the period in Christian theology that marks the span between the birth of Christ and the coming of the Magi, the three wise men. It begins on December 25 (Christmas) and runs through January 6 . We are now in the season of the Epiphany, sometimes also called Three Kings' Day. Now, I guess I will have to take down that Merry Christmas Jesus thingy before the neighborhood association decides to fine me for not abiding in the rules.

To me though this seems so abrupt to end the holidays like this. I still want to see that star over Bethlehem bringing Good News to all the world. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God's love to all people.

The scriptures we read in church the next few months will help us remain in the light of the Epiphany. If we look at the world around us and listen to the conversations we engage in, we can perceive God in the Light behind above, within, around, and below the world. We CAN see a vision of God within this Covid extreme world! The Light of Christ is brighter than any darkness we see or hear!

When we pay more attention to the Light of the Epiphany season we approach our world differently and can find it more difficult to abuse ourselves, others, and this whole creation. This is learning to live in the light and live responsibly merely by being good and avoiding the temptations and evils surrounding us.

I call you to live the light of Epiphany with an active partnership with God in transfiguring creation to see the Christ-child every day... and not only on Christmas Day. Now, go take your Christmas tree and the lights down before the neighbors start talking. February is really waiting too long to do it!

Peace,

Pastor Tony