

SUNDAY MASS

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:

Behold, the Lord, the Mighty One, has come; and kingship is in his grasp, and power and dominion.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 60:1-6.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 72.

RESPONSE:

All nations on earth shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.

- O God, give your judgement to the king, to a king's son your justice, that he may judge your people in justice, and your poor in right judgement. **R**
- In his days shall justice flourish, and great peace fill the moon is no more. He shall rule from sea to sea, from the River to the bounds of the earth. **R**
- The kings of Tarshish and the islands shall pay him tribute. The kings of Sheba and Seba shall bring him gifts. Before him all kings shall fall prostrate, all nations shall serve him. **R**
- For he shall save the needy when they cry, the poor, and those who are helpless. He will have pity on the weak and the needy, and save the lives of the needy. **R**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

Alleluia, alleluia! We have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship the Lord. Alleluia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON:

We have seen his star in the East, and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.

In his book "O Mother Blest", Fr Seán Wales highlights the role of Mary in our lives. Taking us on a tour through icons and feasts of Mary, inspiring explanations of the Marian prayers we know so well, and other Marian themes, he offers us a spiritual gem that will not only deepen our devotion to Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, but will also lead us closer to Jesus, her Son.



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THE WEEK AHEAD

Live the Word

Mon 8 Jan BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Isaiah 55:1-11; Resp: Isaiah 12:2-6; Mark 1:7-11

"Baptism ... makes the neophyte "a new creature," an adopted child of God, who has become a "partaker of the divine nature," a member of Christ and co-heir with him, and a temple of the Holy Spirit." – Catechism

Tue 9 Jan (St Adrian of Canterbury, Ab)

1 Samuel 1:9-20; 1 Samuel 2:1.4-8; Mark 1:21-28

When we are confronted by evil and injustice in our world, what do we do? Do we conveniently avoid it, or do we stand up to it like Jesus did – confidently, and with God's authority?

Wed 10 Jan Liturgy of the Day

1 Samuel 3:1-10.19-20; Psalm 40; Mark 1:29-39

"God saves you in your body, not from your body. Your body is holy and beautiful to God. For after all, it is the human body in which God placed God's image, the *imago dei*." – Nadia Balz-Weber

Thu 11 Jan Liturgy of the Day

1 Samuel 4:1-11; Psalm 44; Mark 1:40-45

Reflect, today, upon your closest relationships in life, then consider what most directly hurts those relationships. Like the leper, seek healing from Jesus, and seek to find ways of rectifying those hurt relationships.

Fri 12 Jan Liturgy of the Day

1 Samuel 8:4-7.10-22; Psalm 89; Mark 2:1-12

How do you treat people who are caught in a cycle of sin? Do you roll your eyes at them and turn away? Or do you firmly determine to be there for them to give them hope and to assist them in their time of need?

Sat 13 Jan (St Hilary, BD)

1 Samuel 9:1-4.17-19; 10:1; Psalm 21; Mark 2:13-17

Reflect, today, upon Jesus' call to Levi to "Follow Me". Ponder the inner certitude he was given in that moment. Try to imagine what he experienced and what others may have thought of his choice to follow Jesus.

Sun 14 Jan 2ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1 Samuel 3:3-10.19; Psalm 40; John 1:35-42

Which comes first? Does feeling safe and held by God allow us to deal with others in the same way? Or does human tenderness allow us to imagine that God must be the same, but infinitely so? Does it really matter?

(KEY: SOLEMNITY; FEAST; Memorial; (Optional Memorial) Ab=Abbot; B=Bishop; D=Doctor

Catholic Link

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

Epiphany of the Lord • Year B
Divine Office: Week I • 7 January 2024

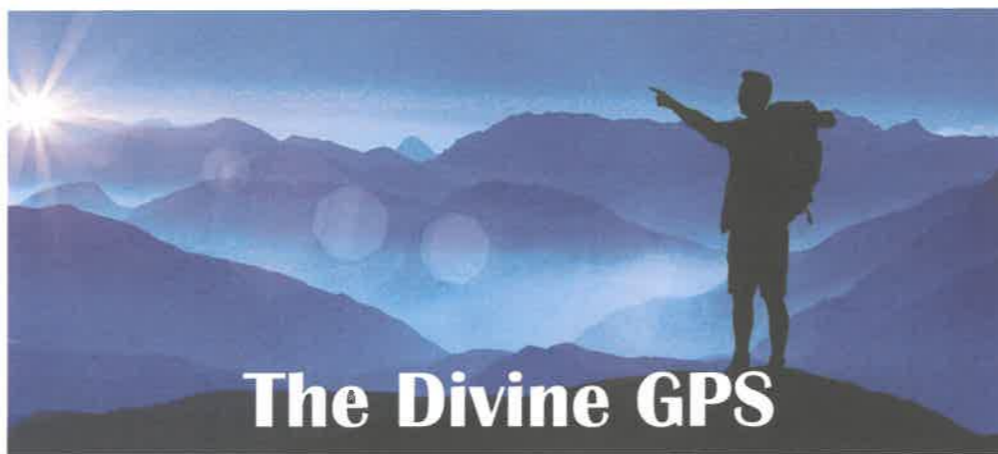


Image by Mohamed Hassan from Pixabay

Biblical narratives are not just there for story time. The parables of Jesus are not his imagination run wild for our entertainment. If there are Bible stories, it is because they serve a purpose for our salvation. They tell us something of the ways of God.

With this purpose in mind, the bishops of Malta* wrote a wonderful reflection on the Feast of the Epiphany in 2017 using its story as a metaphor of our moral and spiritual lives. They compare the light of the star to the light of conscience leading us by stages to a deeper encounter with Jesus, adding that this message is particularly relevant to people who find themselves in complex situations. They specify the situation of divorced persons, some remarried.

Picking up on Pope Francis statement that "no one should be condemned forever as this is not the way of the Gospel", the bishops of Malta draw from the Feast of Epiphany the wonderful lesson in hope, that God shows the Magi "a different route back home" (Matthew 2:12). Christ always shows a way because he is the Way.

So, the Epiphany narrative provides us with a powerful image of how God is able to open up new routes for us in our Christian lives, even if – or especially if – our previous journey may have been one of darkness, marked with mistakes and bad experiences. The greatest "light" to illumine the way is Christ himself. Everything that we have celebrated about Jesus during these past few weeks of Advent and Christmas must not be lost, but renewed

on today's Epiphany feast, as we beg him to cast his light ahead of us into all the knowns and unknowns of 2024.

The bishops of Malta also compare the Epiphany star to the light of conscience which "speaks to the human heart: 'do this, shun that'. For we have in our heart a law written by God.... Conscience is the most secret core and sanctuary of a person. There we are alone with God, whose voice echoes in our depths." (Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, par. 16) But the light of conscience can grow dim if it is not constantly 'charged' or 're-booted' by the light of Christ, the light of the Bible, and the light of the Church's teachings.

The Dominican theologian, Jean-Miguel Garrigues has come up with a brilliant metaphor for the way the Holy Spirit leads us "to the complete truth" (John 16:13). It is an image that our 'tech' age probably understands better: the GPS navigation device used in a car (nowadays an app on every smartphone). We know how it works: punch in a destination and away you go. But what does the GPS do when you deviate from the route it has mapped out? It does not ask you to go back to the starting point and begin again. Instead, it immediately proposes an alternative route starting from where you are at that point. That's how the Spirit works too.

May the light of the Epiphany be a new starting point for us, too, on our road to God!

*Bishops of Malta, "Guidelines for the Interpretation of *Amoris Laetitia*", 2017.