

Prayer Service for the Feast of the Epiphany

Opening Prayer:

In the name of our God who shares divinity with us,
In the name of our God who shares humanity with us,
Let us give praise and thanks!

Hymn: The First Noel (v. 2 on ...)

They looked up and saw a star, shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same star, three Wise Men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.

This star drew nigh to the northwest, O'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
And there it did both stop and stay, right over the place where Jesus lay.

Then entered in those Wise Men three, full reverently upon the knee,
And offered there, in his presence, their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Reading: Matthew 2: 1-12

“When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh....”

Some of the attitudes or thoughts drawn from the story may speak to our hearts at this Epiphany season:

They set out...

They traveled together...

Ahead of them went the star...

They lived with questions...

They found the child with Mary, his Mother...

They were overwhelmed with joy...

They offered Him gifts...

They fell in adoration...

They opened their treasure chests...

They left for their own country by another route...

Reflection Question: What attitude or experience have we shared with the Wise Men on our journey to Bethlehem this season?

Sharing

Music: “I Wonder as I Wander”

Reading:

“How often the sight of a star fills us with delight. It is awesome to stand outside and behold a star-studded night. The stars, it seems, have always called us to greatness.

www.churchnewsireland.org

Prayer Service for the Feast of the Epiphany

They stir up within us a sense of mystery. Poets write and sing about the stars. Artists paint them. We are told to follow our star. And yet, for all our romanticizing about the stars, if the truth be known, they sometimes lead us to places we would rather not go.

A star marks our paths with light and guides us to deeper insight. With that deeper kind of seeing comes new responsibilities. It is not always easy to follow a star.

Long ago three who have been called 'wise' journeyed to the small insignificant town of Bethlehem. They followed a star that led them to the powerlessness of God lying in a manger. It was the last place on earth one would expect to find the Creator of the stars, yet that is where those beams did shine. We call such a moment an Epiphany. An Epiphany is a manifestation of the Divine Presence, right in the midst of daily life.

Once a mother whose son had been murdered saw a star that said, 'Forgive'. The star led her to a prison, to the murderer. The light of the star enabled her to discover within her own heart a mercy she didn't know she possessed. The mercy belonged to the Creator of the stars but it was hers to use when she was in need. She used it well.

And then, there was that man of God from San Salvador... Oscar Romero!... He had an Epiphany. He saw a star of truth that shone straight through all the lies, impelling him to speak out against injustice. He spoke. He died. His star shines on.

And each of us.... So many people with hearts of courage, have had 'Epiphanies' that led them to pathways of light. What is our Epiphany? Where is our sky all shining with stars? And which stars are calling us?"

(From: Seasons of Your Heart, Macrina Wiederkehr, OSB, p. 51-52)

Silent Reflection

Closing Hymn: Go, Tell It On the Mountain"

*Maureen Currie rscj
Province of Canada*