



Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish

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The Epiphany of the Lord. 08th January 2023

The Gospels make explicit God's Word to us, through the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Discipleship means prayer and reflection on the events of our lives that we might see God's presence and work in our lives, as well as, obedience to God and God's will

We are disciples of Jesus!

Gospel: Matthew 2: 1-12

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod, suddenly some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east. 'Where is the infant king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.' When King Herod heard this he was perturbed, and so was the whole of Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, 'At Bethlehem in Judaea, for this is what the prophet wrote: *And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means the least among the leaders of Judah, for from you will come a leader who will shepherd my people Israel.*' Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately. He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared and sent them on to Bethlehem with the words, 'Go and find out all about the child, and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.' Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out. And suddenly the star they had seen rising went forward and halted over the place where the child was. The sight of the star filled them with delight, and **going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were given a warning in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.**

Commentary

This is a wonderful story about who recognises Jesus and who does not. The Magi are from the East; they are not Jews, the chosen people of God, they are Gentiles, and yet they recognise the signs of a momentous birth and set out to find the child. The king of the Jews, Herod, as well as the chief priests and scribes (the chosen people of God) - the very people who should be looking

*for the Messiah, have not seen the signs. The positive and joyful response of the Gentile Magi is contrasted with the opposite reaction from those who should have known better (the chief priests and scribes). The Magi fall in homage to a small child in an inconspicuous house. They have recognised the divine in the ordinary and bow before him as they would a king. In Matthew's community, many were struggling with the fact that the Jews reject the proclamation of the Gospel while the Gentiles accept it and come to faith in Christ. **(Extracted from the Melbourne Archdiocese Summit)***

Note. *Alas, though nativity scenes depict the Magi being at the manger, Matthew records the Magi arriving in Bethlehem sometime later and "going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary," it was the shepherds who first paid homage to the child Jesus.*

The Feast of the Epiphany

The Magi Arrive Bearing Gifts



We know little about the Magi. They were probably astrologers from Persia and journey to Bethlehem, following an astrological sign. **Over time, the Magi of the Gospel became the three kings of folklore and eventually even developed names: Balthasar, Melchior and Caspar. These three are often depicted as Asian, African and European, representing the three known continents of the time.**

What is important is that the visit of the Magi retains the original meaning: **that Christ came to all nations and is the salvation of all people who recognise Him.** We assume that there were three Magi based upon the naming of their three gifts (the Gospel does not say how many Magi paid homage to Jesus). In Matthew's Gospel, **they represent the Gentiles' search for a saviour.** We have come to consider the gifts they bring as a foreshadowing of Jesus' role in salvation. Gold is presented as representative of Jesus' kingship. Frankincense is a symbol of his divinity because priests burned the substance in the Temple. Myrrh (an expensive spice) which was used to prepare the dead for burial, was a forecast of His death - Jesus' body was anointed with myrrh prior to His burial; Nicodemus, a rich and influential Jew (who was probably a secret disciple of Jesus) provided the myrrh.

Note. *The three wise men met again at Sebaste, in Armenia in AD 54 to celebrate the feast of Christmas. Thereupon, after the celebration of the Mass, they died: St Melchior on 01st January, aged 116; St Balthasar on 06th January, aged 112 and St Caspar on 11th January, aged 109. The Roman Martyrology also lists these dates as their respective feast days. The Tomb of the Three Wise Men, is at the Cologne Cathedral, in Germany. A large gilded and decorated sarcophagus containing the bones of the Magi, is positioned above the high altar.*

There are Several Other Epiphanies of Christ

The word Epiphany means "to reveal." Historically, several moments in Christ's early life and ministry are "epiphanies" of Christ, they include:

Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. The angel appears to the shepherds (the shepherds represent God's chosen people - the Jews (whilst the Magi represent the rest of the world) to announce the

arrival of the saviour. The angel said: *'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord...'* Luke 2:8

The visit of the Magi, as the shepherds represent the Jews, the Magi represent the non-Jews (the Gentiles). The Magi reveal **that Christ came to all nations and is the salvation of all people**. Matthew 2: 1-12

Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist. At Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, **Jesus is revealed as the Son of God**. A powerful event when the Holy Trinity manifest together in scripture – God the Father; Jesus, the Son of God and the Holy Spirit. Mark 1: 7-11.

Jesus' changes water into wine at the wedding at Cana. Jesus reveals His divinity to his disciples. John 2: 1-11.

The Transfiguration, when Jesus' divinity is revealed to the three disciples: John, Peter and James. Luke 9:28-36.

The many miracles of Jesus during His ministry (even raising the dead) when Jesus' divinity is revealed to His followers.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI Passes to God Saturday 31st December 2022



Elected in 2005 as successor to St (Pope) John Paul II, Benedict reigned until 2013. Pope Benedict received the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick on Wednesday 28th December. He was "lucid and alert" on Thursday morning, and on Friday was able to participate in the celebration of the Mass.

A humble priest final testament: ***"Finally, I humbly ask: pray for me, so that the Lord, despite all my sins and shortcomings, welcomes me into the eternal abodes. To all those entrusted to me, my heartfelt prayer goes day after day."***

Parish Worship Schedule

A parish is a community of disciples of Jesus, who gather to celebrate the Mass and to "live the Gospel." **We are a community of Jesus' disciples and our church is here for our collective and individual worship and prayers**. We welcome the faithful to our Mass, or, to light a candle at our Marian chapel, or, to just pray in silence; and to grow spiritually.

Mass Times	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu & Fri	8.00 am (the Rosary after)
Mass Time	Saturday	6.00 pm
Mass Time	Sunday	9.30 am
Reconciliation	Saturday night	5.15 – 5.45 pm
Anointing of the Sick	Liaise with Fr Greg	
Baptisms, marriages and funerals	Liaise with Fr Greg	

Our Prayers of the Faithful

The Church expects that each parish community would prepare their own prayers so that all the community can join in the sacred intercessory prayer (Prayers of the Faithful) at Mass. In our parish prayers of the faithful, we pray to the Lord, to help and comfort our sick and suffering. We also pray for the souls of our recently departed, as well as, for those whose anniversaries, we remember at Mass today.

Prayers for Our Sick and Suffering

Lorna Johnstone, Fr Francisco, Heron Sharpe, Antoinette De Silva, Tony Galvez, Jenny Cassin, Betsy De Wass, Frank De Luis, Nigel, Christina Sim, Maria Marshall, Claire Webster, Ivan Fletcher, Fabian Edmunds, Celia, Crowley family, Joe Sundaram, Thilak, Diana Scully, Bluey Thompson, Celeste Vicensoni, Carla, Annette, Joe Gibson, Georgina and Ronnie Ghosh, Gemma Altieri, Fred Kara, Reg Brown, Mary & Derrick Jansen, Marie Webster Viola, Gerry and Maisie Prendergast, James Rydqvist, Annie Magdalena Rydqvist, Anne Rydqvist, Dr Andrew Chilufya Snr, Robbie Iliffe, Donna Green, Horatio Hill, Ilean Wright, Cathy and Peter Ghouse, Jimmy Olivero, Kaye McIntyre, Jeff and Tony Francis, Sheila Vanwieringan, CD Joseph, Marina Lim, Wendy Price, Julie Pinto, Christopher Jaffer, Bonnie Sullivan, Joslyn De Sylva and Philomena Rodrigues.

Prayers for our Recently Deceased

Fr Andre, Gwen Lange and Denis Critchley.

"God blesses those people who grieve. They will find comfort" (Matthew 5:4).

Fr Andre - was a dear friend and neighbour of our parish. Fr Andre resided at Niana House and would often avail himself, as a relieving priest, to celebrate the Mass for us. He was devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary and would often be seen walking around the village and along Fern Road, with his rosary in his hand. **May he find comfort in the embrace of Our Mother in Heaven.**

Anniversaries of our Beloved Departed

Norman Doss (05 Jan), Stanley D'Souza (06 Jan), Katie Pinto (07 Jan), Greg Brough (07 Jan) Patt Wimbridge (11 Jan) and all our departed relatives and friends.

Jesus assured Martha at the tomb of Lazarus: "I am the Resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Me will live even though he dies" (John 11: 25-26).

Note: Parishioners may email Cliff at: cliffordgerard@bigpond.com, for any additions (or deletions) to our lists of sick, recently deceased and anniversaries, whom you wish to be included in our "Prayers of the Faithful."

Everyone has a name, and if we are to pray for them, we should say their name.

Our Next Parish St Vincent de Paul Donations is to be 04th/05th February



It is Christian Charity and a source of spiritual joy for us to help the needy and distressed – our compassion for others, is always pleasing to the Lord.

Parishioners who may need a "helping hand," may contact the SVDP Society for assistance, or speak with our local SVDP representatives: Penny

D'Souza (mob: 0421 215 620), or, Michael Hardless (mob: 0419 421 122), at Riverton Parish.

The names of those requesting and receiving assistance is always confidential.