

Epiphany ABC -- 2021
Isaiah 60.1-6///Ephesians 3.2-3,5-6///Matthew 2.1-12

→sometimes the best place to hide a treasure is right out in the open...

→rather than burying it in the ground or hiding it away in a safe...

→and sometimes the best way to announce a great message is to whisper it gently to just a few people, rather than shouting it from the rooftop or mounting it on a gigantic billboard in Times Square

→so it should come as no surprise that when God chose to announce the birth of his Son, Jesus Christ, to the world he did so on a quiet night through the light of a shining star.

→today we celebrate the Feast of Epiphany as our Christmas season continues to unfold in our midst...

--this feast celebrates the one compelling truth of the Gospel that..... Jesus Christ is God's gift to the whole world.

→long before there was a stable nursery, or shepherds serenaded by angels...or even wise men following a distant star....the prophets saw this day coming and rejoiced

→Isaiah the prophet, throws bold colors on the canvas about this day saying to God's people: "*The glory of the Lord has risen upon you*" and "*Nations shall come to your light, to the brightness of your dawn.*"

→and in our Gospel reading...we hear the familiar story of the three kings...on their journey....following a star...searching for the savior...the Messiah who would save the world.

→they see a strange new light in the sky...and overcome with its brightness and significance...they set out on a journey from their homeland in search of its meaning

→...sometimes we too are on a search [as well] looking for meaning and purpose, worth and value, substance and perseverance, when it comes to life, relationships, and others....

PAUSE

→today's feast is aboutthe search of the astrologers...the search of people throughout history and our search for God's presence in our world.....the search of knowing and realizing that God is a part of who we are.....

→and as always.....our task....our challenge....is to make His presence come alive..... especially when so many of us these days seem to be searching for God....searching for answers....searching for meaning in light of all that has been happening over the past few months.

---this is what epiphany is all about: **MAKING REAL THE PRESENCE OF GOD
IN OUR LIVES AND WORLD**

→and on this feast...we celebrate...the end of our search...our restlessness....our quest.....as we realize that God has truly come to us and is with us

PAUSE

However...just as important and perhaps more pertinent to our circumstances todayis what the astrologers based their journey on...

→it was the **HOPE** they had that they would find the Messiah...the answer to their quest...the fulfillment of their journey...and the joy of their hearts

→it was the strong **HOPE** of the three astrologers that gives meaning to their journey

PAUSE

→the star in the sky that we hear about in today's gospel was a light shining forth not only calling the wise kings to the infant Jesus but also calling us to the message of Christ as well.

→and so...as we continue the journey we have been involved in over these past months...and as we start a new year...we might ask ourselves what is our **"hope"**

--to what extent are we becoming a light in the darkness of our world

→to what extent are we lighting the way of Christ.

PAUSE

→without a doubt...the past months have presented us with some daunting challenges...

→we have had to deal with the impact of the virus on every aspect of our lives...

→and as a result...we have been living under a cloud of apprehension and fear, uncertainty and anxiety...

→however the light and glory of the Gospel we celebrate today...the revelation of God's dream in our midst and presence of Jesus Christ in our world...should give us the courage to begin to crawl away from this darkness and turn ourselves towards the light.

→there is cause for us to rejoice and be glad...to return to living life...certainly with a note of caution but also

→to become God's people once again...to do God's work in this world...and to live God's message in our lives...among our hopes and fears...our trials and hardships...our success and accomplishments.

→it is such a dream...worthy of our lives, our time and our efforts.

PAUSE

→the three wise kings followed the star to the infant Jesus purely on the hope that they would find the Messiah...

→....may we too follow the very same star....God's dream for you and me

and more importantly, through our words...actions....and deeds may we too find the Lord Jesus...the dream of God in each one of us

→May we always be a star of God's presence to one another...and may the hope, anticipation, and goodness we have for the coming months....dispel our fear, alleviate our anxiety and end our uncertainty....