

Epiphany ABC -- 2020  
Isaiah 60.1-6///Ephesians 3.2-3,5-6///Matthew 2.1-12

→[Monday is January 6th ] ....tomorrow is January 6

→January 6 is often considered the traditional day when Christians all around the world celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord.

→in the past it was even called 2<sup>nd</sup> Christmas or “little Christmas”

→and in many cultures...the opening of gifts and gatherings of families take place on this day.

→quite literally...Epiphany means “revelation” or “shining forth” and today celebrates the Lord’s gift to all the world...it is meant to be a day to recognize the “light” shining in the darkness

→and the song we sing is the familiar “We Three Kings” that tell us about the story we just heard in the gospel...of the three wise kings visiting Bethlehem in search of the Messiah

→and so today...we celebrate this feast...as the “the big reveal” today...the recognition that Jesus is God’s gift to the world.

→as our Christmas season unfolds in our midst...Isaiah the prophet, throws some bold colors on the canvas about this day.....we heard those who were **searching** for God’s presence in their lives that: “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 star in the sky...and overcome with its meaning and significance they set out on a journey from their homeland in **search** of what this was to mean

→....sometimes we too are on a search as well.

→often we look for meaning and purpose, worth and value, substance and perseverance when it comes to life, relationships, and others....

→we also [at times] search for other things as well....the big merger, the perfect holiday, the next big idea, the ideal partner, the lost childhood, the newest trend, the shiniest toy...that one special person who will change our lives.

→today's feast is about our search....the search of the astrologers...the search of people throughout history for God's presence in our world, and in you and me.....the search of knowing and realizing that God is a part of our life.....

→and as always.....our task....our challenge....is to make this presence come alive..... especially when so many people these days seem to be searching for God....searching for answers....searching for meaning

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

→and today...we celebrate the **BIG REVEAL**...the end of our search...our restlessness....our quest.....as we realize that God has truly come to us and is with us

*PAUSE*

→if we listen to the people we encounter in the scriptures...especially during the Season of Advent and Christmas....they show us what it means to have God revealing his Son...his presence among us.....

→Mary listened...even when what she heard sounded impossible

→Joseph trusted....even when that trust became difficult and he was filled with doubt

→the shepherds hoped...even when life offered them little reason to do so

→and the three kings searched, even when faced with danger....following their call, recognizing their quest and finding their desire

→these ancestors of faith remind us that

→God **is** visible to us.... if are willing to open our eyes

--God **speaks** to us..... if we have the humility to listen

--God **reveals** to us his love and mercy....if we are willing to stand aside and let it enter into our lives

→Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and today.... the wise kings...remind us that we have a God who keeps on appearing

--they teach us that God is present and active in our lives.....

PAUSE

the Feast of Epiphany..... **is** God's presence in our world....the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior

→and we come together once again today to sing and pray with our dreams and gifts...hopes and fears....trials and hardships....our success and accomplishments knowing that God will always be with us

PAUSE

→we may never celebrate the “perfect Christmas, or land the most important client, or acquire the brightest toy or satisfy our wildest dreams....

but we do have a God who wants to be part of our lives.... who changes us and gives us hope and understanding

→and just like the three wise kings of long ago....today we can celebrate Epiphany..... knowing that our search for God is over....