

God Is Good All the Time

The Epiphany of the Lord

Mrs. Beth Scholl, D.R.E.

*Let us pray [that we may be guided by the light of faith.]
Father, you revealed your Son to the nations
by the guidance of a star.
Lead us to your glory in heaven
by the light of faith.*

*We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

-New Saint Joseph Sunday Missal



The Feast of the Epiphany

Officially called "The Epiphany of the Lord," this feast celebrates the epiphany (manifestation) of Christ to the Gentiles, symbolized by Christ's manifestation to the Magi (Wise Men). The feast originally was more closely connected to Jesus' baptism, the primary theme of the feast in Eastern Churches to this day. In addition, other manifestations of Christ were often commemorated during Epiphany, including the miracle at Cana. In fact, it has been asserted that the Baptism of the Lord, the adoration of the infant Jesus by the Magi, and the miracle at Cana all historically occurred on January 6 (see Abbot Gueranger's works). Whether this is true is contested, but either way, the Epiphany solemnity is celebrated on January 6, which falls within Christmastide. In some Catholic regions, the feast is translated to a Sunday. The Eastern Churches often call the holiday *Theophany*, which means "manifestation of God." Eastern Christians also refer to the Epiphany as "Holy Lights" because they baptize on this day, and baptism brings about illumination. Traditionally, Epiphany marked the end of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

The story of the Magi traveling from the East to see the Christ child appears only in the Gospel According to St. Matthew. The word Magi, in Greek *magoi*, comes from the Latin word meaning "sage." These particular sages were possibly Zoroastrian astrologers from Persia. Upon seeing a star rising in the East (the Star of Bethlehem), they realized it was a sign that the king of the Jews had been born. According to St. Ignatius of Antioch (d. AD 107), the star shone with an inexpressible brilliance, and the sun, moon, and other stars all formed a chorus around the special star (*Letter to the Ephesians*, 19). The wise men followed the star to Bethlehem of Judea, and to Jesus' dwelling there. Having arrived, they worshipped the infant Jesus, and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

There have been numerous traditions that have grown up about the Wise Men. Typically we think of there being three wise men because of the number of gifts, but Matthew doesn't tell us the exact number. Since the 3rd century, Christian writers have referred to them as kings, even though Matthew doesn't specifically tell us that they were royalty. Their names in the West, Gaspar (or Caspar), Melchior, and Balthasar date to the 6th century. The names mean: Master-of-Treasure, King, and Protect-the-King, respectively. The Syrian Church has given them the following Persian names: Larvandad, Hormisdas, and Gushnasaph.

Read more at: <http://www.churchyear.net/epiphany.html>



The Wild Goose

Session 8 – *The Spirit and the Sacraments*

Session 9 – *The Fruits of the Holy Spirit*

Session 10 – *The Spirit and the Desert*

Session 11 – *The Spirit Convicts*

Session 12 – *The Spirit's Freedom*

Session 13 – *The Spirit's Witness*

Session 14 – *The Spirit Remembers*

Beginning January 9th

All are welcome on Wednesday mornings @ 8:45am,
in the St. Francis Room,

Come for Scripture Study, a Video with Discussion,
and Prayer about how the Holy Spirit works in us!