

**Pastor's Pen**



**The Epiphany of the Lord**—We celebrate the Epiphany this Sunday, rather than on the traditional date of January 6<sup>th</sup>. Epiphany is a Greek term that means a revelation, manifestation or showing. Our Lord's epiphany is threefold: When the star led the Magi to the infant king; the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River, and; the first miracle of Jesus during the wedding at Cana. When the liturgy was reformed, these events were separated, and so we have two, the epiphany with the wise men and the baptism of the Lord, being celebrated at separate times during the Christmas Season.

Today's first reading is taken from the third part of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. It speaks of a bright light of the Lord shining in and from the Temple of Jerusalem. The Temple had been restored and the presence of the Lord had reentered it. The Lord desires the people to walk by his light, that is, to live their lives according to his commands. They will be able to see the Lord even in darkness, because his light is so bright.

The light from the Temple is also attractive to the nations, that is, to Gentiles, as well as Jews. They all are drawn to the Lord's dwelling to find divine guidance for their lives because of his light. The peoples streaming toward the Temple are accompanied by the wayward children of Israel who rightfully claim the Temple as their own. As the foreign nations stream towards Jerusalem, they bring their wealth with them. There will be prosperity where God has chosen to dwell. The Epiphany is anticipated by the gifts of gold and frankincense that are brought to Jerusalem from the farthest reaches of the known world.

In the passage from the Letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul writes of a direct revelation that was given to him by God. It was immediate knowledge of God and his plan through the gift of the Holy Spirit. The content of this direct revelation was that the Gentiles were attached to the Jewish community as a gift from God. As such, and in Christ Jesus, they become co-heirs of his promises and life in and through him. We can see the flow from the first to the second reading. The nations, the Gentiles, are drawn by the light of God to the Temple in Jerusalem. The reason why is revealed by St. Paul that the Gentile are co-heirs of salvation in Christ. That was startling to learn in St. Paul's day.

The gospel is a familiar part of the Christmas story. I call it part two of the story. The first was of Jesus' birth and the shepherds beholding the Christ child, and the second when the Magi arrived to pay him homage as the newborn king of the Jews. The Magi are depicted as learned kings who studied astronomy and interpreted the signs of the heavens. They followed the star which ultimately led them to Bethlehem where they found Jesus with his mother, Mary.

**OVER**

The appearance of the Magi was problematic for King Herod who was called the King of the Jews. Apparently, Herod's advisors, the scribes and the pharisees, were asleep at the switch because they didn't read the signs of the times that pointed to the birth of Jesus. Foreigners, pagans from the east, were more up-to-date than the ones who should have read the signs and known that Jesus was born.

Herod was threatened by the birth. That's why he met with the Magi in secret and maybe why they received precious little knowledge about where the child could be found. Herod also was scheming. The Magi would find the Christ child and disclose the location to him so that he could kill the child along with his parents and anyone else associated with them. The Magi were alerted by God in a dream not to return to Herod so they started home using a different route.

The gospel passage associates the Gentiles with Jesus from the earliest moments after his birth. Their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh signified that Christ's kingship would be established through his death and resurrection which was offered for Jew and Gentile alike. The prophetic tradition paved the way for this stunning revelation which was articulated by St. Paul. Christ died for all and all are called to walk the way of Christ since he is the light of the world. God sets the terms for salvation and we don't. Salvation is open to all who profess their belief in Jesus and walk the narrow road of his ways. We evangelize because we believe that Christ died for all. As such, we want all people to know him and to believe in him.

**The Jubilee Year of Hope**—The Jubilee Year will be closed by Pope Leo on the Feast of the Epiphany, January 6<sup>th</sup>, at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. In late December, the jubilee doors were closed at the other major patriarchal basilicas in Rome.

**Journey in Faith Novena**—The Archbishop has invited the archdiocese to pray a novena (nine consecutive days of prayer) for the Journey in Faith pastoral planning process. It will begin on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and conclude on January 10<sup>th</sup>. Each day will have a specific intention, scripture reading and reflection. Our parish will be participating in it and I invite you to be a part of the prayer. It can be done on an individual basis. A link to the novena can be found at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/19pZpdEn1VKRI4WS48LBUPQIZQfrRkVzl/view>.

2026  
WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Grace  
for the  
JOURNEY

Saturday  
JANUARY 30  
8:30AM-1:30PM  
Holy Family Catholic Church

Speakers  
Kitty Cleveland  
Kelsey Kaiser

REGISTER to attend in-person by contacting Kaylin Wood at [k.wood@dbqarch.org](mailto:k.wood@dbqarch.org) or call 641-513-1314.

Do you want "Grace for the Journey"?  
Register now for the 2026 Archdiocesan Women's  
Conference Beauty in Christ: Grace for the Journey  
Saturday, January 31, 2026, 8:30 AM to 1:30 PM  
Holy Family Parish Hall  
Connect with hundreds of other Catholic women as we  
strengthen our faith in Jesus! Kitty Cleveland and Kelsey  
Kaiser will give powerful witness about how the Lord has  
filled them with "Grace for the Journey"! Invite your sisters  
and friends, and be ready for an awesome day!  
Register by emailing Kaylin Wood at [k.wood@dbqarch.org](mailto:k.wood@dbqarch.org)  
or by calling 641-513-1314. For more information go to  
<https://www.archwomensconference.org>