

The Living Word

The Epiphany of the Lord

7 January 2024

First Reading Is 60:1-6

The glory of the Lord shines upon you.

Arise, shine out, Jerusalem, for your light
has come,
the glory of the Lord is rising on you,
though night still covers the earth
and darkness the peoples.

Above you the Lord now rises
and above you his glory appears.
The nations come to your light
and kings to your dawning brightness.
Lift up your eyes and look round:
all are assembling and coming towards you,
your sons from far away
and your daughters being tenderly carried.

At this sight you will grow radiant,
your heart throbbing and full;
since the riches of the sea will flow to you;
the wealth of the nations come to you;

camels in throngs will cover you,
and dromedaries of Midian and Ephah;
everyone in Sheba will come,
bringing gold and incense
and singing the praise of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 71:1-2. 7-8. 10-13, R. see v.11

**(R.) Lord, every nation on earth will
adore you.**

1. O God, give your judgement to the king,
to a king's son your justice,
that he may judge your people in justice
and your poor in right judgement. (R.)
2. In his days justice shall flourish
and peace till the moon fails.
He shall rule from sea to sea,
from the Great River to earth's bounds. (R.)
3. The kings of Tarshish and the sea coasts
shall pay him tribute.
The kings of Sheba and Seba
shall bring him gifts.
Before him all kings shall fall prostrate,
all nations shall serve him. (R.)
4. For he shall save the poor when they cry
and the needy who are helpless.
He will have pity on the weak
and save the lives of the poor. (R.)

Second Reading Eph 3:2-3, 5-6

*The revelation means that pagans now share the same
inheritance, that they are parts of the same body.*

You have probably heard how I have been
entrusted by God with the grace he meant
for you, and that it was by a revelation that
I was given the knowledge of the mystery.
This mystery that has now been revealed

through the Spirit to his holy apostles and
prophets was unknown to any men in past
generations; it means that pagans now
share the same inheritance, that they are
parts of the same body, and that the same
promise has been made to them, in Christ
Jesus, through the gospel.

Gospel Acclamation Mt 2:2

Alleluia, alleluia!

**We have seen his star in the East;
and have come to adore the Lord.**

Alleluia!

Gospel Mt 2:1-12

We have come from the East to worship the king.

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in
Judaea during the reign of King Herod, some
wise men came to Jerusalem from the east.
'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they
asked. '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. 'At Bethlehem in
Judaea,' they told him, 'for this is what the
prophet wrote:

And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are by no means least among the
leaders of Judah,
for out of 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. 'Go and find
out all about the child,' he said '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 there in front of them was the
star they had seen rising; it 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 warned in a dream not to go
back to Herod, and returned to their own
country by a different way.



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Unlike the writers of the horoscope
columns in our newspapers, these Wise
Men were scholar astrologers, probably
from Syria or Iraq. They believed that
the stars controlled the destiny of
human beings, but they were open
enough to the Hebrew scriptures to be
led to the amazing discovery of a star-
child in Bethlehem.

They knelt before this baby, doing
homage, because they realised that the
stars did not control *this* infant, but that
there was something of this baby which
caused the night sky to respond! They
preserved the child from the deadly
schemes of Herod, and then they
returned to their home country, 'by a
different way'. They were on a different
journey after encountering the Child.

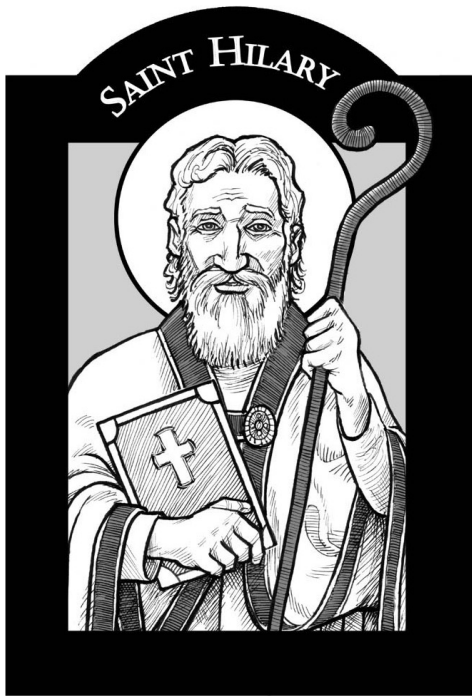
Who can doubt that the Holy Spirit led
these wise men from the East to the
manger? In fact, the Holy Spirit is at
work in every human being, prompting
each and every one to become seekers
after Truth.

As a person responds to this prompting
and tries to lead a good humane life,
then the Church teaches that the Holy
Spirit can draw them into the saving life
of God. Thus, billions in China and India
who have never heard the Gospel, can
be saved. But, such persons do not
savour the fullness of Truth as we do
with the privilege of having the
scriptures and the sacraments. Where it
is possible, we are obliged to offer them
the road map to the Truth.

We can take a moment to affirm our
faith in the baby in the manger as the
One of whom Dante spoke: 'the Love
which moves the sun and other stars'.
Come, let us adore him.

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St Hilary was born at Poitiers in c. 315 of a wealthy pagan family. He married and had a daughter and after many years of study, he converted to Christianity. In 353, Hilary was chosen bishop of Poitiers, and for the remainder of his days he became an outspoken defender of the faith against Arianism. He opposed Emperor Constantius' attempt to take control over church matters, which led to him being exiled to Phrygia. During this period, Hilary wrote works explaining the faith, and although severe in tone, his writings were responsible for converting many people. He returned to Gaul after four years in exile and continued his fight against Arianism. Hilary introduced Eastern theology to the Western Church, and was proclaimed Doctor of the Church in 1851.



Help the three wise men to get to Bethlehem



Wordsearch

Try to find these words:



east
frankincense
gold
house
important
kneeled
myrrh
search
secretly
star
warned
wise

D	D	Q	H	Q	A	V	K	R	U	B	E	B	E	B	B	Z
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