

Epiphany – Wise Men Studied the Stars.

January 6 is recognised by many churches as the Feast of the Epiphany, and by Orthodox Churches, it is their Christmas Day!

An "epiphany" is a discovery or an amazing insight; some thing or event that just makes things clear, all of a sudden. It is about the historic evolution of God's relationship with us, at the birth of Jesus. The promise made to the people whom God called his "chosen people" is now given, revealed, shown, displayed to the rest of the world. The seekers, or Wise Ones, who studied the stars for an understanding of "mysteries," were led to see the mystery of a child born in a stable. They could not have understood the full meaning of this discovery, nor could Mary and Joseph have fully explained it to them. However, their presence as part of this story fulfils the promises of the prophets that God's saving presence among us would be a gift for all the nations, for everyone.

For us today, we can ask for the grace that we might have an 'epiphany' - that a light will go on and that we will be filled with a sense of being gifted with the abundance of a deep mystery. And a mystery is something like the "plot" a playwright has in his or her mind. We sit down to watch the play, not knowing what is to come but when the curtain opens, the mystery of the story is revealed, for all of us to see it played out.

For us today, the mystery of God's love for us is revealed in the image of the child born for us - born to be one of us, and born in poverty and powerlessness, come to be with us. We could say "God is with us, is one of us, is with me in my darkest moments," over and over and it may not sink in. But, if we contemplate that baby - and all that that simplicity and vulnerability means - we can become deeply moved by a profound appreciation of this gift. We can kneel before Jesus today - in our own way of expressing our reverence and awe for the holy ground on which we find ourselves. We can offer him "gifts" which recognize that we are in the presence of the God who made us and who died to save us from the power of sin and death. Might we offer our simple prayer of gratitude today? Might we rest a while, savouring who we are, when we realize what God has done for us in Jesus? We don't have to stop and apologize for not having fully seen it before. We just need to let it soak in now.

I may have missed the mystery of the baby in the manger last week. If I have time to let it become clear to me today, what a gift that would be.

I can be set on fire with this love, the more I can imagine being a light for others, sharing this wonderous light with others.

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