

Let us pray.

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace
in believing,
that we may abound in hope, through the power of
the Holy Ghost,
that we may proclaim the appearing, of Our Lord
and Saviour Jesus Christ,
by our lives and by our words,
that we may dwell with Him and all the saints,
in glory everlasting. Amen.

**Addresses
for
Morning and Evening Prayer**

**according to the
1943 Lectionary
of the
USA 1928 Book of Common Prayer**

**Intended for use
by Layreaders
in the absence of a priest**

**by Ed Pacht
Rochester NH**

Epiphany

Morning Prayer

First Lesson: Isaiah 60:1-9

*Here beginneth the sixtieth chapter
of the Prophet Isaiah.*

1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.

2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

4 Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.

5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the LORD.

7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory.

8 Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?

that they are all those who, hearing His call, follow Him through the waters of Baptism, through the hearing of His Word and the receiving of His Sacraments, through a repentant attempt to follow Him.

We are told by St. John in the Revelation that heaven will be filled by those called out of every tongue and race and nation.

In the words of St. Paul:

*" ... Jesus Christ was a minister
... that the Gentiles
might glorify God for his mercy;
as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee
among the Gentiles,
and sing unto thy name.
And again he saith,
Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.
And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles;
and laud him, all ye people.
And again, Esaias saith,
There shall be a root of Jesse,
and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles;
in him shall the Gentiles trust.*

He has appeared!

He has appeared to us,
and we have the privilege to worship Him,
both now, at our altars, and in our daily life,
and forever at the throne of Heaven.

To preach good tidings,
 freedom, healing, comfort, joy,
 and to proclaim the day of the vengeance of God.

Both.

It's not a mushy message of "I'm OK, you're OK".
 It's not a denial of the horrors of sin.
 It's not permission to do as we will,
 regardless of rules.
 It's a frank and open declaration that sin is bad,
 that it deserves to be met with wrath,
 that its evils will not be tolerated;
 but it's also a declaration of the love of God,
 of his willingness to forgive, and to reform
 those who will accept His gift on His terms.
 We are in bondage,
 we do deserve the wrath of God,
 and yet He wants us,
 enough to send His Son among us to reveal mercy,
 to reveal mercy in His preaching,
 in His miracles,
 in His living,
 and by His death upon a Cross.

It is a message from God to His people,
 but in the Wise Men from the East,
 in the Syrophenecian woman,
 and in the glorious work of St. Paul,
 we are told, plainly, loudly, and joyfully,
 that His people are more than the ancient Israel,

9 Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships
 of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their
 silver and their gold with them, unto the name of
 the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel,
 because he hath glorified thee.

Here endeth the First lesson.

Second Lesson: 2 Corinthians 4:1-6

*Here beginneth the fourth chapter of the Second
 Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians.*

1 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we
 have received mercy, we faint not;
 2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty,
 not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of
 God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth
 commending ourselves to every man's conscience
 in the sight of God.
 3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are
 lost:
 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the
 minds of them which believe not, lest the light of
 the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of
 God, should shine unto them.
 5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the
 Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.
 6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out
 of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the
 light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the
 face of Jesus Christ.

Here endeth the Second Lesson.

Homily

A strange story, when you think of it:
 Far to the East of Israel,
 in countries still very much in the news --
 perhaps Iraq, perhaps Iran,
 there were some wise men, magi.
 We usually call them kings,
 though they probably weren't,
 and we speak of three of them,
 though the Scriptures never give us a number.
 There are a lot of legends about them,
 making them come
 from various widely separated countries,
 representing several different races, and so forth.
 Perhaps, as the scholars are saying,
 these stories aren't the way it really was,
 but that doesn't matter.
 The stories still speak the truth
 of what the day really means.
 Who were they?
 "Wise men", the Scripture says.
 "Magi", we often call them,
 and Magi were priests of the Persian religion,
 Zoroastrianism, it's called, after its founder.
 They believed in God,
 and had real glimmers of the truth,
 even if they didn't have it quite right,
 and they were hungry for God.
 Their own holy book, called Zend-Avesta,
 wasn't enough,
 but they had other books,
 books used by the Jews who lived in their country,
 and began to study them.

This morning's lessons at Morning Prayer,
 and today's readings at Mass,
 center very much on
 the Wise men and their message,
 but tonight is a little different.
 Tonight we take a little broader view.
 We're looking at His ministry,
 both what it was prophesied to be,
 and how He himself lived it out.
 We began with the same passage from Isaiah
 from which He preached
 in the synagogue of Nazareth,
 in a hometown that was not ready
 to recognize Him for who he was.
 He preached Isaiah's words,
 and He openly and boldly applied them to Himself.

to repeat:

*The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me;
 because the LORD hath anointed me
 to preach good tidings unto the meek;
 he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
 to proclaim liberty to the captives,
 and the opening of the prison
 to them that are bound;
 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,
 and the day of vengeance of our God;
 to comfort all that mourn;
 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion,
 to give unto them beauty for ashes,
 the oil of joy for mourning,
 the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;
 that they might be called trees of righteousness,
 the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.*

Homily

"Epiphany" simply means "Appearing"
The alternate name for the day is "Theophany",
(*Thee -OFF-a-ny*)

which means 'the Appearing of God."
This is one of the oldest feasts on the Calendar,
and, in its origin,
commemorated all the events of the Incarnation,
every aspect of the coming of the Creator
into His own creation,
to walk among us as a Man among men --
from Jesus' birth
through His Baptism
and His preaching ministry.

In the East,
much is made on this date of His Baptism,
and the open revelation
that this man is the Son of God,
(which we remember
on the Second Sunday after Epiphany),
We in the West
concentrate on the coming of the Wise Men,
and the first appearance of Christ to the Gentiles.
Either way,
it is the celebration of the appearance of our God,
of the revelation of His presence
among His people,
and the preparation
for the one, true, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice
that He came to Earth to make.

With these books,
and with something they saw in the sky
(a star, we are told,
though we don't know how that worked,
only that God supplied it for direction)
they came to know about a King
to be born in a faraway land,
and they set out to worship him.
Whether it was twelve days as our tradition has it,
or forty days, or two years, as others say,
they found Him,
after a long and dangerous journey,
they found Him,
the son of a very ordinary Gallilean family,
and worshiped Him as a king,
and left gifts, and went their way,
and we don't hear of them again.

A strange story indeed,
but what significance does it have?

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come," says Isaiah,
"and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee."

*"In him was life;
and the life was the light of men,
and the light shineth in the darkness ...
says St. John,
" ... the true Light,
which lighteth every man that cometh into the
world."*

" ... a light to lighten the Gentiles,"
sings the priest St. Simeon.

*"He came unto his own,
and his own received him not,"
says St. John,
"But as many as received him,
to them gave he power to become the sons of
God ..."*

Jesus came into the world,
not just to be king over a small nation,
not just to save his relatives,
but to give himself for the sins of the world

Those strange and foreign sages
come across the wide desert,
called by a light they had not known,
as the firstfruits of His call to every nation,
to an eternal destiny in an eternal heaven,
peopled by those He has redeemed,
*"out of every kindred, and tongue,
and people and nation,"*

The Light has come!
The glory of the Lord has been revealed!
Salvation is upon us!

As St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians:
*"... God, who commanded the light to shine out of
darkness,
hath shined in our hearts,
to give the light of the knowledge
of the glory of God
in the face of Jesus Christ.*

Let us go forth and tell what He has done for us.
Not only to our families.

17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through
Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.
18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those
things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to
make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,
19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the
power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem,
and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully
preached the gospel of Christ.
20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not
where Christ was named, lest I should build upon
another man's foundation:
21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken
of, they shall see: and they that have not heard
shall understand.

Here endeth the Second Lesson.

Second Lesson: Romans 15:8-21

Here beginneth the eighth verse of the fifteenth chapter of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans.

8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:

9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.

10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.

11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people.

12 And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,

16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

Not only to our friends.
Not only to people like us,
But to the world.

Let us pray.

O God, who hast made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the whole earth, and didst send thy blessed Son to preach peace to them that are far off and to them that are nigh; Grant that all men everywhere may seek after thee and find thee. Bring the nations into thy fold, pour out thy Spirit upon all flesh, and hasten thy kingdom; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Evening Prayer

First Lesson: Isaiah 61

Here beginneth the sixty-first chapter of the Prophet Isaiah.

1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;

3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

4 And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.

5 And strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers.

6 But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

7 For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

8 For I the LORD love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering; and I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.

9 And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed.

10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.

11 For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.

Here endeth the First Lesson.
