

## Living the Epiphany

As you sit to read and pray with this resource, begin by reading **Matthew 2:1-12** to remind yourself of the way in which the visit of the Magi is described in Matthew's gospel. This is the only gospel that includes this story, yet it is of considerable importance to our understanding of how this newborn babe is seen by earthly leaders who understand his place in salvation history. They see that their own power and authority are very much secondary to the new-born Messiah.



In the Western churches, the Epiphany ('manifestation') became an occasion to celebrate one element in the story of Christ's birth, the visit of the far-travelled magi, understood as the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. Matthew's account speaks simply of 'wise men from the east'; later tradition fixed their number at three, made them kings and recalled their resonant names – Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/churchs-year/times-and-seasons-1#mmm72>



Lord of Light,  
Just as You guided the three kings  
toward your newborn Son,  
Lead us to Your never-ending Love,  
Wrap us in Your warm embrace, and  
Teach us to gaze at the stars You  
place within our lives each day.  
In Your loving name, we pray,  
Amen.



*Adoration of the Magi, Andrea Mantegna*



## Living the Epiphany

KAREN KIEFER

The doors of the Intensive Care Unit were as heavy as the worry that hung in the air. Beyond the next set of frosted glass doors, there were individuals, including a family member, fighting for their lives. They were fighting for the gift of more time on God's earth. This reality stirred in me the epiphany that time is God's magnificent gift.

*Living the Epiphany, Mercy Associates prayer resource, January 2023, prepared by Carmel Ross*

As we begin a new year and our Church celebrates the Feast of the Epiphany, it's a wonderful time to reflect on the gift of time. It sounds so simple, so obvious; time is a gift. Yet, because we are human, we sometimes forget to honour time. Instead, we ignore it, wrestle with it, mismanage it and take it for granted.

Now that the busy-ness of the Advent season has passed and the Christmas season draws to a close, let us take **more time** to praise God for his magnificent gifts and to hold on to the true meaning of the epiphany. This child born in Bethlehem, Jesus Christ, is the Son of God, and what a revelation to behold.

In Matthew's gospel, the Christ child is revealed to the Magi, who have come from the East to adore Him. They "were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh."

If we take some time, we can live the epiphany and see the significance of the gifts of the Magi in our own lives.

Our time on this earth is gold. It is so priceless. Once it passes, we can't get time back. Yet, God gives us memories in time's place.

***So what memories are you going to make with your time today? How will you spend and share your gold?***

Our time is a precious and desired commodity like frankincense and myrrh. These aromatic resins were used to inspire the senses as well as comfort and heal. Time anoints us with love, comfort, struggle, growth, healing, discovery and the chance to experience hope and joy in our daily lives.

***So how are you using your time to love and grow? How are you using your time to heal physically or emotionally? What will you discover today? What brings you joy? What gives you hope? How will you offer your precious time to comfort others?***

Time is God's magnificent gift.

As I walked out of the Intensive Care Unit, I knew the gifts of the Magi lived within, offering some, including my family member, the gift of more time through healing, and others the peace of Christ as they are called to rest with Him.

**KAREN KIEFER** is the Director of the Church in the 21st Century Center at Boston College and the mother of four daughters.

January 04, 2019

<https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/centers/church21/sites/c21-engage/articles/Living-the-Epiphany.html>



***Living the Epiphany, Mercy Associates prayer resource, January 2023, prepared by Carmel Ross***

## A Prayer for the Feast of the Epiphany

I wonder sometimes  
If one of the stars that lit Abraham's night  
Was the one that led the Magi to Jesus.  
A dark canvas speckled by the most generous brush—  
What an improbable promise to an old man.  
But our God has never been daunted by the unlikely, the impossible.  
What a sight for the Magi, too,  
A baby resting on hay, his cries mingled with braying and bleating.  
I like to think they heard in those everyday sounds a holy chorus,  
Saw in that noisy tableau a Creator serenaded by His creation,  
All of it embodied, enfleshed—  
All of it good.  
And when we've left our gifts for this implausible King,  
May we, like the Magi, go home by another way—  
Having encountered the holy,  
May we protect it, guard it,  
Trail its light behind us wherever we go.  
A sacred arc transposed from heaven to earth,  
May we ourselves become the star,  
Leading the way to Emmanuel.  
Amen.

— Cameron Bellm

spirit &  
verse



<https://www.jesuits.org/stories/spirit-verse-the-feast-of-the-epiphany/>