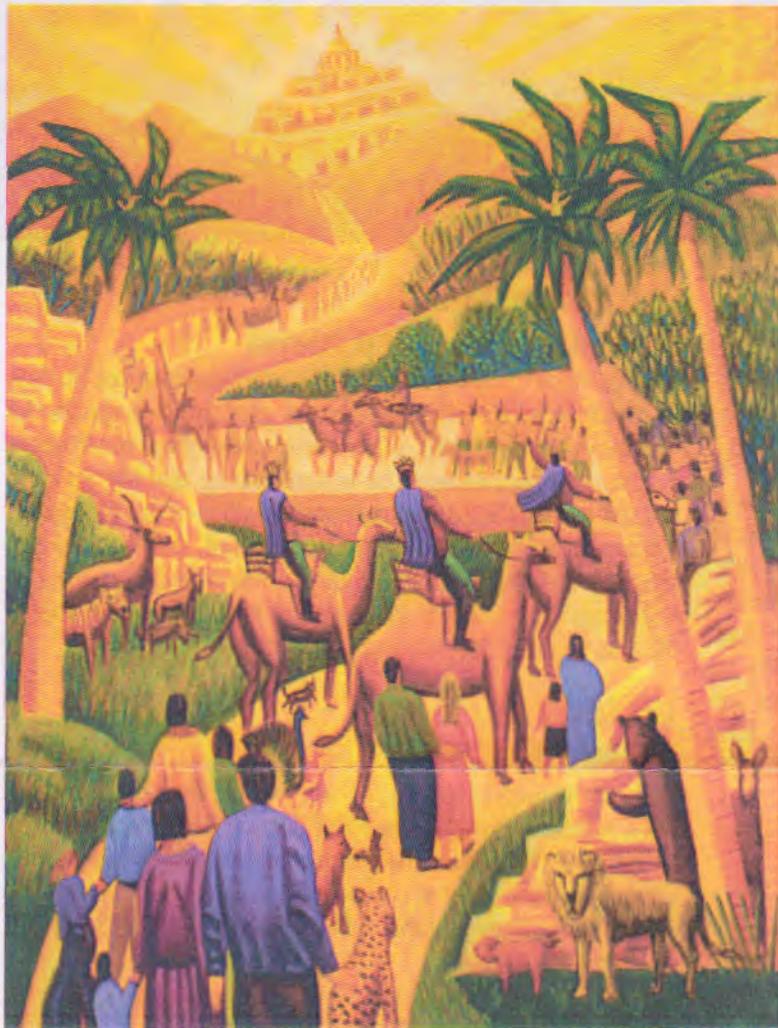


EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



A Family of Nations

Father, Creator of the stars of night,
you call us to be hope for the world
and bring good news of forgiveness
to all.

Your great light, Jesus Christ,
is the morning star that never sets.
May we all gather together in it and
come to you—

a family of nations.

May we be radiant at the sight:
the multitudes, the camels,
the gold and frankincense.

May we proclaim our praises
of the Lord,

and may we be led to embrace the
Kingdom Christ preached
as it unfolds in our lives today.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus
Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Sunday, January 5, 2014

Witness to the Light

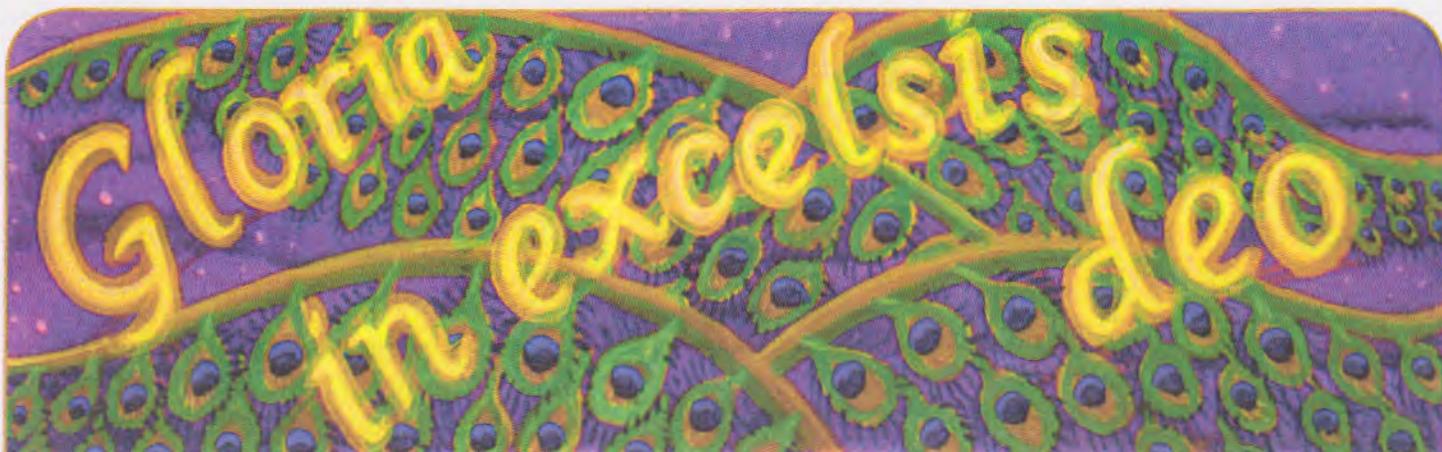


Today's Readings: Isaiah 60:1–6; Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 10–11, 12–13; Ephesians 3:2–3a, 5–6; Matthew 2:1–12. In today's liturgy, God reveals his Son to us, and not only to us, but to "the nations," to everyone. Isaiah's prophecy is full of sharp visual contrasts: "your light has come," "darkness shall cover the earth," "his glory will appear over you." Isaiah wants us to see this revelation, this manifestation of God: "Lift up your eyes and look around." We are called to be witnesses and images of that light.

Just as Isaiah has painted a picture of people from distant lands streaming to Jerusalem, with gifts, "to proclaim the praise of the Lord," Paul wants us to understand that God's invitation to all people is true in his time as well: "the

Gentiles have become . . . members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel." Today's response to the psalm echoes that insight: "Lord, every nation on earth will adore you," and the Gospel tells the story of strangers "from the East" who seek the newborn king of the Jews. The outsiders see and understand. They have "observed his star" and come with gifts, whereas Herod, the chief priests, and scribes are unaware and respond with fear.

The mystery of the Epiphany is a present reality and a hope for the future. So "lift up your eyes and look around." Don't miss seeing the glory of God, and don't miss joining in the great procession.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, January 6

Memorial of Saint André Bessette

Saint André Bessette (1845–1937), whose memorial may be celebrated today, is a model of humility and hospitality. As a Holy Cross Brother in Montreal, André served as door keeper for over forty years. He greeted the poor and visited the sick, who were often cured. Yet he never attributed the cures to himself; they were the work of Saint Joseph. Today the magnificent national shrine of Saint Joseph's Oratory sits on Mount Royal in Montreal, Canada. In what ways might you offer hospitality or care to others? Today's Readings: 1 John 3:22–4:6; Psalm 2:7bc–8, 10–12a; Matthew 4:12–17, 23–25.

Tuesday, January 7

Memorial of Saint Raymond of Penyafort

Today's Gospel presents Jesus's first miracle at Cana, where water was changed into wine. It was an act of hospitality that enkindled his followers' faith in him. St. Raymond of Penyafort (1175–1275), whose memorial may be celebrated today, was a Dominican lawyer and canonist. He was so expert that the pope called him to Rome to condense and bring order to the Vatican's compilation of laws. His final product became the authoritative law collection for the Church at that time. Today's Readings: 1 John 4:7–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 3–4, 7–8; Mark 6:34–44.

Wednesday, January 8

Be Not Afraid

Today's Gospel tells of Jesus walking on the sea during a storm, calling out "Take heart, it is I, do not be afraid." The phrase "be not afraid" appears in the Bible 365 times. These are the first words that Pope John Paul II used to open his papacy on October 22, 1978. Consider using this phrase as part of your daily prayer. Today's readings: 1 John 4:11–18; Psalm 72:1–2, 10, 12–13; Mark 6:45–52.

Thursday, January 9

Proclaim the Good News

The Word of God, especially when proclaimed at the liturgy, is meant to be a source of spiritual growth (as it was in the synagogue at Nazareth). When Jesus quotes from the Prophet Isaiah in today's Gospel, he is announcing that the Spirit is indeed working in him to produce the signs of the Kingdom: release for captives, healing for the blind, freedom for the oppressed. In what ways might you advance the coming of the Kingdom? Today's Readings: 1 John 4:19–5:4; Psalm 72:1–2, 14 and 15bc, 17; Luke 4:14–22a.

Friday, January 10

Make Me Clean

In today's Gospel we hear the story of the man cured of leprosy, whose request for healing is such a strong statement of his faith. He is sure that Jesus can heal him, if only Jesus chooses to do so. And of course Jesus does choose to heal him. Today's Readings: 1 John 5:5–13; Psalm 147:12–13, 14–15, 19–20; Luke 5:12–16.

Saturday, January 11

Intimacy of Christ

Today's Gospel brings Christmas Time to a close by recalling the important roles of John the Baptist. In Advent we saw his ministry as a baptizer preparing a way for Jesus, and notably as the baptizer of Jesus (commemorated in tomorrow's feast). Today John is explaining that he feels no competition with Jesus. He says "He who has the bride is the bridegroom" and calls himself "the friend of the bridegroom." The intimacy of the marriage bond is the human paradigm for the intimacy between Christ and the Church (the bride). John has assisted the bridegroom in his marriage to the Church, to the people of God. In what way will you celebrate the end of Christmas Time? Today's Readings: 1 John 5:14–21; Psalm 149:1–2, 3–4, 5 and 6a and 9b; John 3:22–30.



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Keeping the Seasons

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