

The Voice

3rd January 2016

The Epiphany of the Lord

Psalter Week 2



CHRISTMAS

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

• **Anniversaries:**

Marie Therese Stanislaus,
Auguste Meyer.

• **Remembrances:**

Maureen May, Maureen Madden,
Mr. W.J. Mortimore,
Mrs. L. Mortimore,
Michael, Philip and
Peter Mortimore.

• **And the sick:**

Loretta Holt, Frances Sara,
Neil Cameron, June Ferry,
Kate Tinson, Beryl Allen,
Lola Proctor, Jack Moulds,
Alan Harland, Grace Williams,
Arnold Diorio, Ibrahim Selim,
Mark Taylor, Carol Cross,
Fr. Bill Meacham, Bill Hunt,
Bruce Spence, Mick Dunn,
Natalie Rankin, Vince Zappavigna,
Audrey Barsenbach,
Pat Fitzgerald.

Recently some Christian scientists got to work trying to explain the star that led the wise men to Bethlehem.

They came up with a complicated, and no doubt plausible, astronomical theory about how a certain brilliant star may have appeared around the time of the birth of Jesus. Though I was intrigued by their methods, I wondered why they bothered.

Matthew's wandering star is not about astronomy. It's religious shorthand for describing how the heavens preside over and guide the events of the world. The image of a star is used in similar ways in the Books of Deuteronomy, Numbers, Isaiah and the Psalms. This entire feast is all about symbols, not science. Reported by Hippolytus as early as the third century, it is celebrated twelve days after Christmas, the number itself echoing God's goodness in creating and recreating us.

The wise men's star is on a par with the other images Matthew uses. At the centre of each of the first three chapters of his Gospel there is an extraordinary event.

In chapter one Joseph hears the message of an angel in a dream.

In chapter two the wise men find Jesus by following a star.

And by chapter three the heavens open and God speaks at the baptism of the Lord.

By any standards that's quite an opening to a biography! It's all about the manifestation, or epiphany, of God's glory in the world.

And let's look carefully at where and for whom this glory is revealed.

The first instance is to Joseph while he's in bed asleep.

The second is to gentile astrologers who, by reporting their news to Herod, set up an immediate threat to Jesus.

The third instance is to all those Jews who were coming to hear John the Baptist.

Within three chapters of Matthew's Gospel the circles of God's glory revealed in Jesus become more public and change lives. The lives of Joseph, the star gazers, John the Baptist and those who heard Jesus preach will never be the same again.

The Feast of the Epiphany is not an ancient version of Halley's comet. It is about how God's glory changes human hearts. T.S. Eliot got this point in his poem 'The journey of the Magi'.

'Birth or death?
There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt.
I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different;
this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us,
like Death, our death.
We returned to our places,
these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here,
in the old dispensation,
With an alien people
clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.'

And so may this feast change our hearts and enable us to die to self so as to be born to God's glory that can and does shine through us. And may we remember that this epiphany is not meant for us alone, but that we are called to go public with it and demonstrate our belief in today's feast by the way we live, the world we help create, and the one we strive to recreate.

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Psalms Response

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Lord, ev - ry na - tion will a - dore you.

Gospel Acclamation

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

Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

Woy Woy, Umina, Umina Beach, Ettalong, Ettalong Beach, Koolewong, Blackwall, Booker Bay, St Hubert's Island, Empire Bay, Horsfield Bay, Pearl Beach, Patonga,

St John the Baptist Church,

corner of
Blackwall and Victoria Roads,
Woy Woy

Parish Office Ethel Cox Parish Centre
P.O. Box 264 Walter Baker Hall
54 Victoria Road 100 Blackwall Road
WOY WOY N.S.W. 2256

Phone: (02) 4341 1073
Fax: (02) 4341 0214
Email: parish@woywoycatholic.org.au

"He must increase, I must decrease"

Fr. Jack Robson. *Parish Priest.*

Fr. Timothy Raj. M.S.F.S. Fr. Philip Thottam.

M.S.F.S. *Assistant Priests.*

Office Staff: Helen Cameron, Raelene Spithill,
Margaret Cooper.

Office Hours: 9.30 a.m.—4.00 p.m., Monday to Friday

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Vigil Saturday 5pm; Sunday 7.30am, 9.15am, 6pm.

WEEKDAY MASS TIMES

Monday-Friday 7.45am (Monday & Tuesday with Lauds);

Saturday and Public Holidays 9am;

First Friday 4pm (with Anointing of the Sick).

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Friday after morning Mass; First Friday, 3.30 p.m.;

Saturday 11.30am; & 4.30pm; Sunday 7.00 a.m.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

1st & 3rd Sundays, 11am; 5th Sunday, during 9.15 a.m. Mass.

Godparents are examples of faith to the child. They must be confirmed and practising Catholics, at least sixteen years old.

If there is at least one godparent, a non-Catholic may act as a Christian witness. Parents and godparents must attend a pre-baptismal instruction, held on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month at 9.30 a.m.

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Every Saturday after 9am Mass until 10am; every Monday until 9am (Public Holidays 10.15am).

HOLY HOUR—EXPOSITION & BENEDICTION

Every Thursday 7.30pm-8.30pm for the needs of the Parish.

PARISH CHOIR— Practice Wednesday nights in the church, 7 p.m.

Enquiries: 4341 3367.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL,

21a Dulkara Rd South Woy Woy 2256.

p 024341 0884 f 0243 445049.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP For information and events contact Sam French 042 244 9539.

CENTACARE Marriage & Family Counselling, Pregnancy help—
20 Watt St, Gosford. Phone: 4324 6403.

MARY MAC'S PLACE Volunteers provide nutritious, freshly cooked meals and information and referrals to appropriate community services. Open Monday to Friday, 11am-1pm, at the Ethel Cox Parish Centre. For more information, please contact Christine on 4341 0584.

CASH HOUSIE every Saturday night at Peninsula Community Centre. Cnr. Ocean Beach Rd and McMasters Rd. Games start 7.30p.m. and finish approx 10.20 p.m., cash prizes. Ticket sales from

We're on the Web!

www.woywoycatholic.org.au



Diocese of
Broken Bay



Have you thought? Epiphany

The feast of the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus to humankind. The wise men are the representatives of humanity bearing witness to this revelation. However, the Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus as not only the Messiah of Israel but the Saviour of the whole world. Interestingly, in this gospel that emphasises the 'Jewishness' of Jesus, the witnesses to the birth are gentiles from a foreign land. Their inclusion is a powerful declaration that the revelation of Jesus is for all people. Regardless of the liturgical year, this reading is always used on the feast of the Epiphany to celebrate this pivotal moment.

