

## EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD—Year B—M01-D03-Y21

01. As we continue to journey through the profound mystery of Our Lord's Birth — **the Church pauses this day to reflect on the great Solemnity of His Epiphany.** And as we all know, the word epiphany itself means revelation or manifestation — **and on the surface this is the EXACT meaning of this Feast—the revelation of God's Son, God's Messiah to the gentiles** — the gentiles being represented by the wise men from the East.
02. But the beauty and power of this Feast reveals to us much more than that. It is true that God's Son, God's Messiah, **is revealed to the Gentiles, AND to the world, in this story of the Magi's visit from the East.** But I think the Feast of the Lord's Epiphany means even more—**and that through this event much more is revealed to us.**
03. **FIRST, we clearly see in this moment, in this Child, that God is truly a Person — that God is not some mysterious, impersonal force—or some lofty, unattainable idea—but that God is indeed a Person—a Person Who has now appeared to us in the flesh.**
04. Because the Word didn't become AN IDEA — **the Word became flesh and revealed Himself as one of us—making Himself completely attainable and available to us.**
05. **SECOND, we see clearly how this Person (Who is God) is ALSO love itself—because like God, love is not some lofty, unattainable idea, or mysterious, impersonal force—love is a Person — A PERSON we can now see with our own eyes and touch with our hands.**
06. Because **love itself, love BEYOND ALL TELLING, has come to us, and come among us as one of us** — taking on our very nature — **taking on our pain and our emptiness, by entering INTO them, and flooding them with light—going to EXTRAORDINARY LENGTHS simply to be with us even in our misery.**
07. And so, in this moment, **we see clearly how love is TRULY God's nature—and that because of this, love is an essential part of OUR**

**nature as well** — an essential part of who we are, and who are meant to be.

08. **THIRD**, in this revelation of God's Son, we see **the nature of love itself**—that love is **truly innocent and gentle** — so **innocent and gentle that it makes its first appearance among as a newborn Baby**. And we **ALSO** see that love is truly meek and humble—making its first appearance among us **in the midst of poverty and obscurity**.
09. And for the first time we see clearly that love is **COMPLETELY selfless**—as the **Son of God, Love INCARNATE**, makes a **total gift OF HIMSELF to each and everyone of us**. And we **ALSO** see that love is **giving, not getting**—**receiving, not taking** — that love is not rude, arrogant, or resentful—but patient, kind, and merciful — **that love enriches our poverty, illuminates our darkness, and transforms our nature into God's very own nature**.
10. And so, before **the coming of God's Son into the world**—we really **didn't know what love truly is, and what love really looks like**.
11. **FOURTH**, the Lord's Epiphany reveals to us that **our joy, and our salvation, are not found in things, in people, or in ideas per se, but in a Person—a Divine Person**—the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.
12. In other words, **our peace and our hope, our comfort and healing, our protection and safety**—are not found in material resources, or disciplines, or ideologies—or in political systems, economic theories, or social movements of any kind—but **ONLY in THIS Child—Who is the answer to every dream, every hope, every fear, and every desire that we have**.
13. Because, **ULTIMATELY**, our salvation is **not an idea, or a movement, or a system of any kind, but a Person**—the Word of God made flesh—the Son of God Himself—**by Whom, through Whom, and for Whom, each of us was made**.
14. And so, this Feast cautions us that our lives can get **so hectic, and so bogged down with the concerns of this world**—especially in the

**current worrisome situation in which we are living—that we can forget that our life here on earth is ultimately ALL about this Person, this Child — this Child Who is the manifestation of our PERSONAL salvation — this Child Who is God Incarnate, and Love Incarnate — this Child whose Birth changed our collective and our personal histories forever.**

15. **Because as Our Lord’s Epiphany shows us—ALL our salvation, ALL our hope—ALL our peace and joy—are found in this Child and in our relationship with Him.** For He came not to be a mere thought we devote some time to every now and then. **He came to be our personal Lord and Saviour — to transform our lives — to make our lives rich with meaning, with joy, and with peace.** But this CAN only happen, and WILL only happen, if our entire lives are centred on this Child.
16. **Because as we go through life with the same day-to-day struggles— it’s sometimes difficult to see the impact Christ can have on our daily lives — to see how the coming and revelation of God’s Son can really make a difference at work, at home, in our relationships, and with all our personal issues.**
17. **But unless we enter a deep, close, and personal friendship with the Son of God — we will never know how dramatically He can transform our lives for the better.**
18. **And for this reason, our biggest regret will be that we failed to get to know intimately this divine Person Who should be everyone’s ultimate goal in life—because He is EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE we could ever possibly need and want in this life and the next.**
19. **Finally, the Lord’s Epiphany reveals to us is that: WE ARE NOT ALONE — that, in fact, we are never alone because God is indeed with us.** Of all the titles that Jesus has, Immanuel (God is with us) is the one that **truly resonates on this Feast** and should resonate **MOST within our lives.**

20. I once read a Globe and Mail article about the plague of loneliness in our time. **How never in the history of our planet, has there been so many ways to connect with others—and yet, at the same time, IRONICALLY, so much social isolation—and so much loneliness.**
21. And I can only imagine how much more covid-19 has aggravated this reality—**because if there’s anything that this pandemic has shown us is that there’s simply no substitute for face-to-face interaction.**
22. Although, I found the article insightful, **it’s really no secret that loneliness is one of the greatest plagues of the human heart.** And, of course, it’s also no secret **that there is a big difference between being alone and being lonely** — because sometimes the most acute feelings of loneliness can happen when surrounded by people—**EVEN when surrounded by loved ones.** And sometimes the experience of loneliness can be most profound amidst our own family.
23. This is because **loneliness is much more than a state of mind—it is a state of the heart and a state of the soul as well**—because the greatest desire of the human heart is to be known and to be loved — to have others **truly get us, understand us, and love us just as we are, for who we are.** But even with loved ones—even with those closest to us — this is sometimes not the case.
24. I remember when this became very clear to me. It was during an **especially difficult period in my life — when I was going through a very personal crisis—a crisis in which I felt COMPLETELY alone.**
25. Because even though I was surrounded by family and friends — **it seemed to me that no one truly understood what I was going through.** And because of this I felt very lonely in the midst of this crisis.
26. What I realized at that time is that loneliness makes **every affliction and struggle seem 10X worse**—and that loneliness is an INTERNAL reality, not an EXTERNAL one.

27. But during this crisis, I had a very powerful experience that broke me out of my sense of isolation. It was shortly after attending daily Mass — **I remained in the Church to pray and to ask God for help with this crisis** — and suddenly, while praying, I had a very strong feeling that the Lord had ENORMOUS COMPASSION for my suffering — **that He was really sharing in my pain—and that He was very much with me in my anguish.**
28. I even had a very strong sensation of Him embracing my soul, putting His Arms around me, and comforting me with His Presence. **I knew in that moment that He was very aware of my pain and that He was suffering right along with me.**
29. During that experience, Jesus **didn't take away my pain, which is what I wanted** — **but He made the burden of it so much lighter because He revealed to me that I am not alone in it** — that He is very much with me during this dark period of my life—and that He understands what I'm going through, even if no one else does. And, in that moment, **I realized that this is what He wants to do for all of us — and part of what it means to say that GOD IS WITH US.**
30. And so, the Lord's Epiphany reveals to us that **God is truly with us — and that Jesus is always present to us—journeying through life with EACH OF US** — and that He DEEPLY cares about everything that affects us — **that He is there to share our suffering and to strengthen us in times of trial—to comfort us in times of sorrow — to help us carry our burdens—and in some cases, to carry our burdens for us.**
31. Because the coming of God into our world means that **He is NOW closer to us than our own skin — that He is so close to us, He lives within us and is always beside us — so close to us that our pain is His pain—and our joy is His joy.**
32. And so, this great Feast of the Lord's Epiphany is a beautiful reminder that **we are truly NOT ALONE—because God Himself has come to us, and is NOW with us in a very real and profound way—even**

when we are completely oblivious to His Presence—even in the midst of a pandemic.

33. And this Feast is also a reminder that we ARE NEVER ALONE **because Jesus truly GETS US, and understands us, infinitely more than those closest to us** — and because Jesus truly knows us, and loves us, **like no one else does—and like no one else EVER WILL. AMEN.**