

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father’s only Son, full of grace and truth” (Jn 1:14). The Eternal Word of God came to share his knowledge of God with the human race. More wondrously, he came to offer us a share in the divine life of God. “To those who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to those who believe in his name, who were born not by natural generation nor by human choice nor by a man’s decision but of God” (Jn 1:12-13).

Today we celebrate the Feast of Epiphany. Like the three gifts of the magi, this special feast is represented in three different biblical stories of the manifestation of Christ.

- With the Gospel of Matthew, we recount the manifestation of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. The magi, wise men from the East, traveled for months following the star that they might offer homage to the newborn king. The “Magi were captivated by Jesus and responded with worship” (Barron 35). In recognition of his royal dignity, they offered gold in tribute to the King of kings. Recognizing the greatness of the priesthood they offered frankincense as a sacrifice. They see the divine and also the human. Recognizing his mortality, they offered myrrh, a fragrance used to bury the dead. These wise men welcome Jesus with open hearts. In their encounter, they are changed. They are foreigners, but they have become citizens of the Kingdom of God. They will not betray Jesus by returning to Herod. How is God made manifest in your life? How have you welcomed the foreigner and lavished gifts upon him or her? How have you been faithful to God in a world that constantly tries to have us betray the way, the truth and the life?
- A second Epiphany is made manifest at the Baptism of Jesus. On the shores of the Jordan River, his divinity is made known by the voice of God the Father. “Heaven was opened and the holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased” (Lk 3:21-22). In our own baptism, we become children of God, brothers and sisters of Jesus. God recognizes us as his beloved children, and He is well pleased. We receive grace and the forgiveness of sins. We receive the first down payment of our royal inheritance that is fully complete at the end of our earthly lives when the just are welcomed into heaven and given a full share of the divine life of God. Blessed with such a rich gift, Jesus invites us to share that gift with others. How have you shared God’s grace with others? How have you forgiven others as God has first forgiven you? How have you let others know they are beloved children of God?
- The third Epiphany is at the wedding feast of Cana, the place of his first miracle, the first sign. Jesus himself is “the marriage of humanity and divinity” (Barron 471). Throughout the Old Testament, weddings symbolize the marriage of God and his people. Jesus is hesitant to offer a sign because he knows his hour has not yet come. The Blessed Mother insists and so the servants following the instructions of Jesus draw water and place it in the 6 stone jars. Jesus turns the water into the choicest of wines, a foreshadowing of the forgiveness of our sins, a foreshadowing of the Sacrifice of the Mass made manifest at the Last Supper where Jesus blesses the wine and prays so that that the wine becomes his Precious Blood. How have you expressed God’s love in your own life? How have you honored your Mother by following her will for the good of others? How have you allowed God to transform the ordinary water in your life into the extraordinary and choicest of wines?

With pure intentions, and the help of the Spirit, God is made manifest in your life, in your words and actions. Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.