

“In this is love:
not that we have loved God, but that he
loved us
and sent his Son as expiation for our
sins.”
Mark 4

Third Week of Christmas: January 6 - 12, 2013

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Third Week of Christmas

Sunday is the celebration around the world of the **Epiphany of the Lord**. The light has come into the darkness of the world and our salvation was made known to the Gentiles. The Prophet **Isaiah** offers us a vibrant image of hope and fulfillment: “Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you.” **Matthew's Gospel** brings us the story of the Magi and their encounter with Herod on the way to “do homage” to the newborn King of the Jews. “And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was.”

In the week that follows the Epiphany we continue with more of the beautiful first readings from the First Letter of John. He wants us to believe the message: we are from God and are loved by God and “whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.”

The **Gospels** this week are from all four gospel writers, **Matthew, Mark, Luke and John**. We read of Jesus traveling through Galilee “teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people.” He feeds loaves and fishes to the hungry and exhorts his disciples, “Take courage, it is I, do not be afraid!” when they are caught in a storm at sea. When he reads from the scriptures at the synagogue, he proclaims, “Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.” On Saturday, John tells his

Daily Prayer This Week

This week is a time with two special Sundays book-ending the week. Both celebrations offer an “epiphany,” an understanding and insight into the essence of who Jesus really is. When the Wise Men visit the poorest of families and find the baby Jesus, they have a clearer idea of what kind of king he will be.

At the Baptism of the Lord the following Sunday, Jesus is baptized and the skies open and the voice of God proclaims, “You are my beloved Son.” More than just a prophet, this special relationship with God is made manifest in that moment.

How can we make this week a special one as the Christmas season draws to a close? In some parts of the world daylight is plentiful right now, but for many of us the days are short and the dark of night surrounds us many hours each day. This could be the week to reflect on that darkness and the light that Jesus brings into our hearts.

Each morning as our feet touch the floor next to our beds, we can open our hands briefly in the darkness and ask God to show us the light in our lives. Gratitude is a wonderful way to pray and to recognize the light we sometimes don't notice in our lives. Maybe in this final week of Christmas, we can light a candle at dinner and remember a special blessing we have been given or something we are grateful for in our lives.

*Dear Lord,
You came to your disciples when
they felt alone on the stormy waters
and comforted them with your
presence. Be with me today and let*

followers he is not the Christ. “He must increase; I must decrease.”

Sunday is the **Baptism of the Lord**. We hear the Lord say in the first reading from **Isaiah**, “Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one with whom I am pleased, upon whom I have put my spirit.” Those words are echoed in the reading from **Luke's Gospel**, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” This feast marks the end of the Christmas season and the beginning of Ordinary Time on the Church calendar.

*my heart be touched by the love
you so lavishly give to me. Let me
remember to turn to you in my
fears and darkness and know that
you will heal me.*

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