

Sunday and Feast Day Liturgical Notes for Priests and Deacons

Suggestions for Leading Worship



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RE: Liturgical Suggestions for the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord – Cycle A

Sunday or Feast Day date: January 5-6, 2008

Dear Fathers and Deacons,

An Overview...

On the Twelfth Day of Christmas, Jesus was revealed as the manifestation of God. Even though some in our parishes have thrown out the Christmas decorations, the Church is reaching the peak of the season. This is Twelfth Night. All Christmas long, we have been on a journey toward this day – the Solemnity of the Epiphany – when we acknowledge that Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem, is the manifestation of God. It is a Feast of Light, symbolized by the star which the Magi follow to find Jesus. And when they find Him, they pay Him homage. Christ becomes the light of the world.

In the first reading, Isaiah also portrays the glory of God in terms of light, “*Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem, your light has come.*” The light is for all people, not just the Jews: the Magi are Gentiles. The second reading from Ephesians reinforces the concept that Jesus came for all people: “*the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body.*”

Some Considerations As You Prepare...

1. Since the Epiphany is a feast of light, it would be appropriate to adorn the worship space with more candles for the celebration of the liturgy.
2. The “Proclamation of the Date of Easter,” which is one traditional Epiphany custom in some parts of the Church, does provide an overview of the whole liturgical year. The custom of reading or chanting this proclamation has been resurrected in more places over the past several years. It may be sung following the Gospel, homily or Post-Communion Prayer; it can be found in the *Sacramentary Supplement* or the liturgical *Sourcebook*. It can be sung by the deacon, or a cantor or lector, and done from the ambo.
3. The Preface for the Epiphany is proper for the day (P6).
4. If Eucharistic Prayer I (The Roman Canon) is used, there is a special insert for the Epiphany at the words “in union with the whole Church.”
5. The Solemn Blessing for the Epiphany is also proper. Its text comes from the Gospel and contains images of light shining in the darkness.

Questions for Faith Sharing...

1. Where do I search for Jesus in my daily life?
2. What treasure do I bring to Jesus? Which treasures do I hold back?
3. What or who helps me to focus on Christ as the one to whom I wish to give homage?

Upcoming...

1. Next Sunday is the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. It is an appropriate time to baptize infants, even during Mass. It also marks the end of the Christmas season.
2. On Tuesday, January 8, we observe the Solemnity of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, the patron saint of our State of Louisiana. *Lectionary* texts and prayers are found in the section “Common of the Blessed Virgin Mary.”

Suggestions for Prayers of the Faithful for the Epiphany

Priest: Rejoicing that the light of God's love shines among us, let us pray united in one Spirit.

Deacon (or if there is no deacon, another reader or cantor):

For our Church, that in the darkness of today's world, we may be light for all to see the love God bestows on His people; we pray to the Lord...

For the nations of our earth, that this new year see a renewed commitment to finding a lasting peace, we pray to the Lord...

For all who raise their eyes to the heavens in prayer, that healing and deliverance come to be theirs, we pray to the Lord...

For those with earthly treasures, that their hearts generously share with the less fortunate among us, we pray to the Lord...

For each of us gathered around the table of the Lord today: that we who have found the light of Christ proclaim with our lives the good news of His Redemption, we pray to the Lord...

For those who now sleep in death with Christ, that they find eternal happiness and peace, we pray to the Lord...

[pause; the presider alone concludes]

Priest: God of Love,
you call us out of the darkness of sin
into the glorious light that is the life of your Son.
Receive the prayers we place before you today.
In His holy name we pray.
Amen.