

## **The Epiphany 2026**

**Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish**

**Father Craig Looney**

***Ephesians 3.1-12 St. Matthew 2.1-12***

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Today we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany and the Twelfth Day of Christmas. During the Epiphany Season, we focus on the striking appearances Jesus makes. Jesus is the “Light sent to bring light to the world”.

When we think about Jesus making his first striking appearance to the shepherds on Christmas Day and then to the Magi on the Epiphany, we can then see the other appearances Jesus makes help us to understand Christmas-Epiphany is one long season of celebration of Jesus’ revelation of himself to the whole world.

It has often been said God makes himself known to us in ways that we understand and are likely to get our attention. God made himself known to the shepherds by the appearance of the angels who sang “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom he is pleased!” Shepherds understood angels and paid attention to their message of joy and hope.

The account of the Magi’s visit to Bethlehem is found only in Matthew’s Gospel. The word “Magi” comes from the Greek “magos” and means “magician”. Matthew calls the Magi who came to see Jesus “wise men” from the east. They may have been priests of Zoroastrianism, the religion of the ancient Persian Empire, which is still practiced by about two million people in the world today.

God sent a star to the Magi, because they understood stars, and believed their appearance meant something. They were also well-educated men who would have been familiar with the Hebrew Bible. Perhaps these “wise men” read the passage from Numbers... “And I see the nation of Israel. A king, like a bright star, will arise in that nation. Like a comet he will come from Israel”.

The Epiphany Season is about Jesus...whose name means “God Saves”...bringing light, life and redemption to the World. There is a wonderful hymn written in 1966 by Kathleen Thomerson (1934-2025)...“I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”...that expresses

the hope we get from God making himself known to us through Jesus.  
Let me share with you the hymns simple, yet powerful words:

*I want to walk as a child of the light.  
I want to follow Jesus.  
God set the stars to give light to the world,  
The star of my life is Jesus.*

*I want to see the brightness of God.  
I want to look at Jesus.  
Clear Sun of Righteousness, shine on my path,  
And show me the way to the Father.*

*I'm looking for the coming of Christ.  
I want to be with Jesus.  
When we have run with patience the race,  
We shall know the joy of Jesus.*

*In him there is no darkness at all.  
The night and the day are both alike.  
The Lamb is the light of the city of God.  
Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.*

Soon we will experience the most personal and striking appearance of Jesus when we receive his Body and Blood in the Sacrament of the Altar. We have the opportunity to offer to Him “ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice”...of service to God and others.

At the conclusion of every Mass we hear the Prologue...the first fourteen verses...to Saint John's Gospel. John calls Jesus the light that comes into the world and shines on all people, and darkness can never put that light out.

The Epiphany message is that we are children of light...the Light that **IS** Jesus. We want to follow him and do the very best job we can to be his messengers...to be epiphanies...striking appearances for him.

