



ARCHDIOCESE OF PALO - CATECHETICAL MINISTRY
 Module 18 Family Catechesis January 3, 2020
 FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD CYCLE B
 Matthew 2:1-12 LET ALL NATIONS ADORE CHRIST, THE LORD

INTRODUCTION

Share experiences of the celebration of Christmas and New Year in the family or neighbourhood. How do you feel about these celebrations? What made the celebrations happy or sad?

Regardless of circumstances that happened during the past celebrations, there is a cause for rejoicing because God has come to us. The Feast of Epiphany we celebrate this Sunday, tells us that God would like to make himself known to all nations. Let us adore and give him our homage like the three wise men in our Gospel reading.



OPENING PRAYER

(Sign of the Cross)

Dear God, we have so much to be thankful for on this Epiphany Sunday. Thank You for sending your only begotten Son, that He might be the light of our world. May Jesus Christ be always our light. We pray that we too will shine brightly among us and to others. May we draw others closer to you so that we all come to you with new hearts and know you as our Saviour, Amen.



PHASE ONE REMEMBER THE STORY OF JESUS

1.1 Proclamation of the Gospel Story

A moment of prayerful silence
 We will not be able to understand Word of God unless God himself opens our hearts. Let us now welcome Jesus as he speaks to us through his Word



A reading from the Gospel
 of Matthew (2:1-12)

1 When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in Judea, during the days of king Herod, wise men from the East arrived in Jerusalem. 2 They asked, “Where is the new born king of the Jews? We saw the rising of his star in the East and have come to honor him.”

3 When Herod heard this he was greatly disturbed, and with him all Jerusalem. 4 He immediately called a meeting of all high-ranking priests and scribes, and asked them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 “In the town of Bethlehem in Judea,” they told him, “for this is what the prophet wrote: 6 And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means the least among the clans of Judah, for from you will come a leader, the one who is to shepherd my people Israel.” 7 Then Herod secretly called the wise men and asked them the precise time the star appeared. 8 Then he sent them to Bethlehem with the instruction, “Go and get accurate information about the child. As soon as you have found him, report to

me, so that I too may go and honour him.” 9 After the meeting with the king, they set out. The star that they had seen in the East went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. 10 The wise men were overjoyed on seeing the star again. 11 They went into the house, and when they saw the child with Mary his mother, they knelt and worshiped him. They opened their bags and offered him their gifts of gold, incense and myrrh. 12 In a dream they were warned not to go back to Herod, so they returned to their home country by another way

1.2 Brief Guided silent Meditation / Personal Prayer

We may want to make our own the words of the Wise men from the story?

1. “Where is the infant king of the Jews?”

Do I desire also to look for Jesus so as to be with him?

2. “We have come to adore Him”.

With this word of the Wise men, do I desire to be loving to Jesus as the king of my heart?

1.3 Text in Context

The new born child is Jesus himself. He is little yet a mighty child.

God chose to be born in a hidden place in the town of Bethlehem. But God wanted to manifest himself as the God of all nations who mostly worshipped false gods (idols) that time. The stories of Abraham, Moses and the prophets tell us how the people of Israel come to know the one true God whom they called Yahweh. God is the creator and walked with the people of Israel. He promised a Saviour to live among them. They waited for hundreds of years.

Atlas, the star appeared to show forth, the true King, the saviour who has been born. This is one of the epiphanies of God.

1. Who came to Bethlehem and what do they search for?
2. Why do you think they are called wise?
3. How did King Herod accept the news?
4. What was the response of the scribes and priests to Herod’s inquiry? What was their reaction?
5. Describe the scene of the wise men seeing the child they had been searching for?
6. What gifts did they offer? What does each gift mean?

The gifts of the Magi—gold, frankincense, and myrrh—have come to be understood as symbols of Christ’s royalty, divinity, and eventual suffering and death. They are special because in giving them, the Magi acknowledge who Jesus was to be: our Savior.

7. What warning did they receive from their dream? What did they decided to do then?

PHASE II REFLECT the Story of the Church (Teachings of the Church)



The star led the wise men to find the Child Jesus in Bethlehem. These wise men were foreigners who came from pagan countries, yet they adored the Child Jesus whom they diligently searched for, not minding the fatigue of the journey. They were eager to know what the star is pointing beyond... they asked *Where is the new born king of the Jews?* And when they reached Bethlehem ... *They went into the house, and when they saw the child with Mary his mother, they knelt and worshiped him.*

When was the last time I really knelt and worshipped God?

True worship of God demands obedience especially to the first three commandments. Here they are in simple words

1. You shall have no other gods before.
2. You shall not make idols.
3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.

One may say *I am a good Christian Catholic. I believe in Christ and support charity works of the Parish.* This is good and pleasing!

It takes a sensitive conscience to look deeper into ourselves. For instance we may observe what social media usually says. Some people may think that the world evolves only around them. Selfish attitude may creep in to us without knowing it. What do you think of this trend: selfie and groupie photos posted in facebook with these expressions: *I love me, my family and me, my garden, my meal today and etc.*

Do we attribute to God all our activities and accomplishments. Or do we make idols of ourselves or other material things like money as the centre, forgetting God as the Creator and sole giver of all good things.

During this pandemic do I exert effort to pay homage to the Infant Jesus, who is the cause of our rejoicing this season? What have I done to show my love to Jesus?

Pope Francis reminds us that *forced isolation devised to stop the pandemic was presenting the danger of people living the faith only for themselves — detached from the sacraments, the Church and the people of God. Online Masses and spiritual communion do not represent the Church, ... “This is the Church in a difficult situation that the Lord is allowing, but the ideal of the Church is always with the people and with the sacraments — always* (<https://www.catholicweekly.com>)

One thing pandemic has done to us is that we have more time to be at home with the family due to several lockdowns. We may see if we have helped each other grow in our relationship with God and with one another. Do we take the opportunity to participate in online masses, if we are restricted to attend nearby masses? Do we initiate family prayer together to worship God?

PHASE THREE RESPOND – with/ in my personal faith /community faith story

In the last part of the Gospel reading, it says: *In a dream they [wise men] were warned not to go back to Herod, so they returned to their home country by another way.*

The wise men returned to their country in another road, evading Herod who would like to kill the Infant Jesus. Seeing Jesus face to face, though a mere child, must have changed their entire self. Their seeking and finding was rewarded with long lasting gaze of Jesus, the King of

all the kings. They chose the road of goodness on their return home, not the road sinfulness which Herod pointed to them.

List down the things I can do for Jesus as acts of adoration that will help me become his closest friend. What can we do as a family or as a neighbourhood to help us grow in faith and caring for one another?



CLOSING PRAYER

Father: Christ has appeared among us.
All: Come, let us adore Him.

Mother: The precious gifts which the Magi brought to the Lord this day are threefold, and they are signs of divine mysteries. By gold the power of the King is signified, by frankincense His great priesthood, by myrrh the burial of the Lord.

All: The Magi worshipped the Author of our salvation in the crib, and of their treasures they brought to Him gifts of mystic nature.

Youngest Child: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

All: As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Father: Let us pray. O God, by the leading of a star you manifest your only begotten Son to the Gentiles on this day; mercifully grant that we who know you by faith, may be brought to contemplate the beauty of your majesty. Through the same Jesus Christ your Son. Amen
All: Alleluia.

(Source: Christmas to Candlemas in a Catholic Home by Helen McLoughlin, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota.)

BACKGROUND FOR THE CATECHISTS

CCC 2084 God makes himself known by recalling his all-powerful loving, and liberating action in the history of the one he addresses: "I brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." The first word contains the first commandment of the Law: "You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve him. . . . You shall not go after other gods."⁵ God's first call and just demand is that man accept him and worship him.

CCC 2628 Adoration is the first attitude of man acknowledging that he is a creature before his Creator. It exalts the greatness of the Lord who made us⁹⁹ and the almighty power of the Savior who sets us free from evil. Adoration is homage of the spirit to the "King of Glory,"¹⁰⁰ respectful silence in the presence of the "ever greater" God.¹⁰¹ Adoration of the thrice-holy and sovereign God of love blends with humility and gives assurance to our supplications.

