

MORNING DEVOTIONS

The Feast of the Epiphany

Sunday, January 7, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

Welcome and Opening Sentence

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.*

Almighty God, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us all in eternal life. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray: O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our

Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Old Testament Lesson *Isaiah 60:1-6*

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;

but the Lord will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.

Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;

your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,

because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Psalm 72:1-7,10-14

- ¹ Give the King your justice, O God, *
and your righteousness to the King's Son;
- ² That he may rule your people righteously *
and the poor with justice;
- ³ That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, *
and the little hills bring righteousness.
- ⁴ He shall defend the needy among the people; *
he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.
- ⁵ He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, *
from one generation to another.
- ⁶ He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, *
like showers that water the earth.
- ⁷ In his time shall the righteous flourish; *
there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
- ¹⁰ The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute, *
and the kings of Arabia and Saba offer gifts.
- ¹¹ All kings shall bow down before him, *
and all the nations do him service.
- ¹² For he shall deliver the poor who cries out in distress, *
and the oppressed who has no helper.
- ¹³ He shall have pity on the lowly and poor; *
he shall preserve the lives of the needy.
- ¹⁴ He shall redeem their lives from oppression and violence, *
and dear shall their blood be in his sight.

The Gospel *Matthew 2:1-12*

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Apostles' Creed

*I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth;*

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,*

*was crucified, died, and was buried.
 He descended to the dead.
 On the third day he rose again.
 He ascended into heaven,
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
 He will come again to judge the living and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy catholic Church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life everlasting. Amen.*

A Litany of Thanksgiving

Let us give thanks to God for all gifts so freely bestowed upon us: For the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea,

We thank you, Lord.

For our daily food and drink, our homes and families, and our friends,

We thank you, Lord.

For minds to think, and hearts to love, and hands to serve,

We thank you, Lord.

For health and strength to work, and time to rest and worship,

We thank you, Lord.

For all who earnestly seek after truth, and all who labor for justice,

We thank you, Lord.

For all that is good and gracious in the lives of men and women, revealing the image of Christ,

We thank you, Lord.

For the communion of saints, in all times and places,

We thank you, Lord.

Above all, we give you thanks for the great mercies and promises given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord;

To him be praise and glory. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray for those in need: For the homeless, the hungry, the poor, refugees, the incarcerated, and those struggling to make ends meet.

Hear us, Lord.

For those in this country and abroad who have been affected by natural disasters.

Hear us, Lord.

For the sick, the disabled, those suffering from mental illness, and those in danger of losing hope.

Hear us, Lord.

For those in harm's way, including especially the men and women who serve in the armed forces, in law enforcement, and in other public health and safety vocations.

Hear us, Lord.

For those who are experiencing loss, grief, and mourning those they love but see no longer.

Hear us, Lord.

I invite you to name now, either silently or aloud, those other persons or concerns on your heart.

The Lord's Prayer

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,*

*on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.*

Thanksgiving for the Word

Let us pray: Gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, rich in love, we bless your name and give you thanks. In our need, you make haste to help us. You plant us beside streams of your wisdom, teach us in pastures greening with truth, and guide us on the path of your promise. By your Spirit awaken our faith, that, feasting on your Word, we may love you more fully and serve our neighbor more faithfully; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

The Blessing and Dismissal