

THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

The Epiphany of the Lord proclaims that God reveals Himself in the midst of human fragility and uncertainty. For adult children of dysfunctional homes, this message can be deeply consoling. Many of us grew up navigating confusion, inconsistency, or emotional absence, learning early to rely on ourselves for safety and meaning. Epiphany reminds us that God enters precisely these imperfect stories to bring light, truth, and healing.

The magi are seekers from unfamiliar territory. They leave what is known and follow a light they cannot fully explain. Adult children often resonate with this experience. We sense that something is missing, yet we may struggle to name it. Our early environments taught us to adapt, survive, or please others, often at the expense of our own needs. Recovery begins when we allow ourselves to search for something different.

The magi do not complete their journey alone. When they reach Jerusalem, they seek guidance from those who know the Scriptures. This moment mirrors an important shift in recovery for adult children. We begin to recognize that self-reliance, while once necessary, is no longer sufficient. Healing deepens when we ask for help—through fellowship, spiritual direction, therapy, and trusted relationships.

This Sunday's gospel reading recounts the magi's encounter with Christ (Matthew 2:1-12):

After their audience with the king they set out. 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. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

The encounter with Jesus changes the magi's direction. They do not return home the same way they came. For adult children, recovery offers a similar redirection. While we cannot change our past, we are invited to live differently in the present. Old survival patterns—people-pleasing, emotional withdrawal, hypervigilance, or control—no longer need to dictate our path.

The gifts offered by the magi reflect surrender. Gold symbolizes what we value most, frankincense our prayer and trust, and myrrh our suffering. Adult children often carry unresolved grief and pain. Epiphany invites us to bring these burdens to God, trusting that He can transform wounds into wisdom and fear into faith.

Mary's presence offers a model of gentleness and safety. She does not rush the process or demand understanding. Instead, she allows God's work to unfold. Recovery for adult children unfolds similarly. Healing comes gradually as we practice honesty, set healthy boundaries, and remain open to God's guidance.

Epiphany assures us that God continues to reveal Himself along the way. Each step toward vulnerability, connection, and trust becomes a moment of grace. As we follow the

Light of Christ, we discover that we are no longer alone. God leads us out of isolation and into a life marked by dignity, belonging, and hope.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How does the journey of the magi reflect your experience of seeking safety and meaning as an adult child?
- What old survival patterns might God be inviting you to leave behind as you continue healing?
- In what ways have fellowship, faith, or recovery practices helped redirect your life toward greater wholeness?

MASS READINGS

FIRST READING Isaiah 60:1-6

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13

SECOND READING Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6

GOSPEL Matthew 2:1-12