Epiphanies by Maureen Kelly

“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.”

Matthew 2:11

There are two epiphany stories in most people’s lives. The first one, for me and many believers, is found in the depiction of Matthew’s Gospel in the annual Christmas plays we witnessed as children or later directed as a parish catechist. In that story three older boys dressed in the most elegant (to a child) costumes walk slowly down an aisle carrying their precious gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh as the choir sings “We Three Kings” and, in rare cases, where the boy/kings themselves sing their own parts. This is the Epiphany story of the wonder and mystery of Emmanuel the God with us - the God who is present for every one even the “foreign” Wise Men.

The second epiphany story is the story of how communities of people and individuals, you and I, came to believe in the presence and power of God in our own lives today. These are the personal stories of epiphanies in which we first came to experience the presence of God among us. They are the “aha” experiences that deepened our faith that God is truly with us in the here and now. There are many of them, stories of a God with skin. People and events where we see that light has come, and upon them the LORD shines. (Isaiah 60:1-2)

For me it was my dad. An “abba” who taught me how to read by sharing the daily newspaper headlines and comic section while I sat on his lap long before I went to first grade. A man who made me feel safe, who challenged me when I needed it, who encouraged and guided without taking away my freedom, who let me make mistakes and then showed me how to learn from them. He took the experience of meeting the signs “Irish need not apply” to later impressing on his children the value and talents of every human being no matter their colour, country of origin, financial situation, gender or sexual preference – long before there were movements or slogans. As a child and young adult I would not have named my dad as an experience of God’s presence. It was later in life that I was able to name it.

Often our epiphanies come not in the moment but in later reflection on people and events in our lives. As a hospice chaplain I have the privilege of journeying with those who are dying and their loved ones. Almost daily I see the presence of God with us. I see couples expressing the faithful love of many years, both in concern for each other and in the deep grief of anticipated loss. I see alienated children return to a parent’s bedside after years of separation and be embraced by that parent. I see estranged family members come together to support their loved one. It doesn’t always happen, but when it does it is an epiphany.

And then there are the public figures and the “behind the scenes” unsung epiphany people who are prophetic in their actions for justice. These are the people who work to provide clean water and good nutrition for those around the world. Those who spend their lives working for reconciliation within countries where there has been ethnic cleansing or those who are making gains to educate others about sexual slavery and so many other contemporary issues.

On this feast I leave you with an epiphany question to ponder for yourself: “How are you an epiphany of the presence of God to others?”

Who do you say I am?
The St Mary’s Parish and School Calendar is now available from the front table. Please take your free copy. As usual it’s packed full of Parish dates and loads of Parish and School photos from throughout 2016.

During November, we welcomed

Benjamin William Gleeson
Benjamin is the son of Jonathan and Rachel and brother to Molly. May 2017 bring them much joy and peace.

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Parish Meetings

Parish Council
Thursday, 16th February at 3.30pm in the Parish House.

Parish Finance Committee
Monday, 30th January at 5.30pm in the Parish Centre.

Come and have a winning day at the St. Mary’s Race Day. Family orientated day at the Races 21st January, 2017. Tickets available at Royal Hotel. $50 / ($90 double) includes entry and lunch.

Also on the front table you will find some books that explain the Catholic faith in some detail. If you know of anyone who would like to know more about our faith, please feel free to take one and invite them to explore what we believe.
Weekday and Weekend Masses

Tuesday....Kaloma....11.00am
Wednesday....5.30pm and Friday.........12.15pm

7th/8th January, 2017
SUNDAY EVENING: 6.00pm Goondiwindi

14th/15th January, 2017
SUNDAY MORNING: 9.00am Goodniwindi

21st/22nd January, 2017
Mass time change due to St Mary’s Race Day on Saturday 21st.
SUNDAY EVENING: 6.00pm

28th/29th January, 2017 (5th Sunday)
SUNDAY MORNING: 9.00am

4th/5th February, 2017
SUNDAY MORNING: 8.00am Weengallon and 10.00am Daymar

WE PRAY FOR Those who have entered your kingdom: including Barbara Bishop, Marie Gore, Pat Parson (Margaret Oliver's daughter), Sr Joan MacGinley, RSM, Alicia Devine, Desley Hawker, Greg Oliver, Sr. Colleen Carney, Sr Bess Turvey, Mary Loveday, Timothy Lawless-Pyne, Fr. Mick Skehan, Audrey Albeck, Peter Ints, David Hiles, Shirley Byrne, Mona O’Brien, Norm Hilderson, Chris Finlayson, Maria Magoffin, Mel McGuire, Alma Betts, Darren Benecke, Robert Picking, Len Collins, Vince Mullins, Mary Terry;

For all whose anniversary is at this time: including Patrick Morrissy, Brett Linton, Joan Price, Molly McDonald, Joan Turvey, James ‘Ally’ Brennan, Joyce Turvey, Georgia Bourke, Carolyn Sewell, Paul Zacka, Albert Knight, Pat and Teresa Mullins, David Webster, Leslie “Cloudy” Marsh, Willy Heynen, Kevin Percival, Joan Smith, Irene “Ronnie” Blomley, Marj McMillan, Patrick Burns, Beth Cook, Thelva O’Shea, Lynn Sutton, Rachel Cowmeadow;


If you would like to include the name of someone in these lists, please check with the person or family concerned and then phone Kath on 4671 5087 (Thursday 9am to 3pm).

Let us pray for all those clergy whose anniversaries occur during this month:
Rev. Fr. Thomas Concannon (01/01/48) Rev Fr. William Hall (11/01/95)
Rev. Fr. William Behm (23/01/06) Rev. Fr. Howard Crowe (31/01/36)

Lord, be merciful to your servants, the Bishops and Priests of this Diocese, welcome them into the company of your Saints, in the Kingdom of light and peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

WELCOMERS AT DOOR
ROS & JO PHILLIPS (08/01)
P AULINE CORCORAN & FAY PFINGST (15/01)
J ILL LENNON & ANNE WEBSTER (22/01)

WELCOMER AT MICROPHONE
PHIL ORMES (08/01)
CAROL ORMES (15/01)
P AT THOMPSON (22/01)

1st READER/PSALM
YVONNE ISAAK (08/01)
P AT THOMPSON (15/01)
MARY COLLINS (22/01)

2nd READING/ALLELUIA
JOE HANNA (08/01)
ROS PHILLIPS (15/01)
CLAIRE CHARLES (22/01)

EUCHARIST MINISTERS
CAROL ORMES, BRIAN COOK & MARY BURCHELL (08/01)
MARY COLLINS, YVONNE ISAAK & CLAIRE CHARLES (15/01)
CARMEL GEESON, SUE MCGOVERN & DAWN CLANCY (22/01)

DATA PROJECTOR
ROS PHILLIPS (08/01)
LEEANN WELSH (15/01)
CARMEL SCHAU MBURG (22/01)

MONEY COUNTERS
KAREN CAIRNS & FAY CLARK (08/01)
MARY COLLINS & ROS PHILLIPS (15/01)
DENISE MCCORMACK & JENNIFER LAWLESS (22/01)

GROUNDS ROSTER
JANUARY: MICHAEL & JACK SCHAU MBURG
FEBRUARY: PHIL & CAROL ORMES

THANK-YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS: 02/01/17
ENVELOPES LOOSE $575.00 $190.00
**Introduction**

We live in a world that tends to segregate people along many lines, especially the weak from the powerful. This Christmas season and today’s feast remind us that God’s revelation is for all people and that Jesus was sent for all. God’s will for the human race is unity—that all may be one. This vision is yet to be achieved, and there are those still threatened by it. But today we are called to walk in the light of this truth and to ask: From whom are we still separated? What are we called to bridge this chasm?

**First Reading**

Isaiah 60:1-6

Nations shall walk by your light.

**Responsorial Psalm**

Lord, every nation on earth will adore you

**Second Reading**

Ephesians 3:2-3. 5-6.

All are co-heirs and co-partners.

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*We have seen his star in the East; and have come to adore the Lord.*

**Gospel**

Matthew 2:1-12

Jesus is made known to the powerful.

**Prayers of the Faithful**

For peace among all nations and all people, regardless of their differences ... we pray,

For those who still suffer at the hands of those with power ... we pray,

For those who worship God under other names or through other religious traditions ... we pray,

For those who still have not heard the good news of Jesus’ coming for all people ... we pray,

For those among us who are suffering, who feel oppressed or inferior ... we pray,

For the sick, the dying and the grieving among us; and for those who have died ... we pray,

Let us pray together:

Gracious God, you love all nations and peoples of the earth, and you sent Jesus for all of us. Show us how to extend our love to others, especially those who appear to be different from us. Give us the courage to advocate on behalf of inclusion and to lift up those who are regarded as insignificant. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the light of all nations. Amen.