

**This Sunday's
Counsel**

THEME:

Jesus lights our path when we recognize that we are all co-heirs in Christ.

PROMISE:

"...you shall be radiant at what you see... the wealth of nations shall be brought to you." (Is 60: 5)

WORD:

Is 60: 1-6/ Ps 72: 1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13/ Eph / 3: 2-3a, 5-6/ Mt 2: 1-12

ORDER:

- *Rise up in splendor, your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you. (Is 60: 1)*



BLD Trenton



Community News

Volume 24, Issue 1

<http://bldtrenton.com>

January 5, 2024

Our Search For Truth And Light

REFLECTION:

On the Solemnity of the Epiphany, we celebrate the manifestation of Jesus to the world and His unconditional love for all. It is a celebration of light through the bright guiding star observed by the wise men of the East. As they followed the star of Bethlehem, they were amazed to discover the Light of the world, Jesus Christ.

It was a simple encounter, yet deeply meaningful, that profoundly touched the hearts of the Magi. The magi were non-Jews and the first gentiles to whom Jesus chose to reveal Himself. As wise and learned pagans, but men of goodwill, they searched for the Messiah whom they learned about in their scholarly and astrological studies. Thus, when the long awaited star appeared, their strong determination and belief led them to begin an arduous journey to look for the Divine Savior. They found Him, a new-born King in a manger, to poor parents. In spite of such poverty, the magi gave homage and gifts befitting a royalty: gold, a gift to honor



a king; frankincense, perfume for a priest; and myrrh, an anointing oil.

As Christians, we too have our own guiding star and light – our faith. Faith is the guide in our life-long journey to the Father. We imitate the magi in our faith journey and follow

their example in diligently searching for Jesus, to be close to Him as we seek His guidance and blessings. The star that shines in our life can change us powerfully when we begin to see more clearly the truth about ourselves, our relationship with God, others and community.

As we begin the New Year, let us be attentive to our star of faith that leads us to the Light of Christ. Our life is all about finding Jesus who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. And as we have found Him in our life, we may also bring others to Him that they too may embrace Jesus as their Lord and Savior. All of us are co-heirs of His kingdom.

The Light of Christ continues to shine in our midst when we celebrate the Holy

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**Tending
the
Flack**

It Is The Epiphany Of The Church

Today's Solemnity of the Epiphany celebrates the manifestation of Christ to the Magi, an event that St. Matthew emphasizes greatly (cf. Mt 2: 1-12). His Gospel narrates that some 'Magi' - probably Persian religious leaders - reached Jerusalem guided by a 'star', a luminous, heavenly phenomenon which they interpreted as a sign of the birth of a new king of the Jews.

No one in the city knew anything; rather, the king in charge, Herod, remained very disturbed by the news and conceived the tragic design of the "laughter of the innocents" to eliminate the newborn rival.

The Magi, instead, placed their trust in the Sacred Scriptures, in particular in the prophecy of Micah, according to which the Messiah would be born at Bethlehem, the city of David, situated about 10 kilometers south of Jerusalem (cf. Mi 5: 1).

They departed in that direction and saw the star anew and, full of joy, followed it until it stopped over a poor dwelling. They entered and found the Baby with Mary; they prostrated before him and, in homage of his royal dignity, they offered him gold, frankincense and myrrh.

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*O God, who on this day
revealed your
Only Begotten Son
to the nations by the
guidance of a star, grant
in your mercy that we,
who know you already by
faith, may be brought to
behold the beauty of your
sublime glory.
Through our Lord Jesus
Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with
you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, God,
for ever and ever. Amen.*

Online Giving

You can now send your tithes and love offerings via **Paypal**.
Donate link can be found at
www.bldtrenton.com

Or mail check to:
BLD Trenton Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 1367
Toms River, NJ 08754

The Lord's Provision

December 29, 2023

Tithe :\$345.00
Love Offering :\$221.00

Thank you for your generosity!!!

God's Blessings

Birthday

Patrick Mazo	1/5	Carmela Palumbo	1/6
Eppie Rebong	1/5	Woody Woodard	1/7
Ash Young	1/5	Jose Alvarenga	1/10
Jay Mijares	1/6	William Colon	1/10
Jeric Balmaceda	1/11		

Anniversary

Val & Grace Antona	1/5
Manny & Jocelyn Rodriguez	1/5
Manny & Haydee Maramara	1/6
Ogie & Aida Odejar	1/7
Leo & Nona Alquiros	1/8
Wendell & Mildred Lumapas	1/8

Who Are You Gonna Call (or Text)?

For Mama Mary's visit - Beth Felibrico 732-995-7407
For Prayer Service - Mary Anne Arias 732-688-3962

Heartfelt Listening

Listening with the heart entails much more than simply hearing a message or exchanging information; it involves an interior openness that can intuit the desires and needs of others, a relationship that urges us to abandon the patterns and prejudices that at times lead us to pigeonhole those around us. Listening is always the beginning of a journey. The Lord asks his people to have this kind of heartfelt listening, to enter into a relationship with him, who is the living God.

That is how the Virgin Mary listens. She receives the message of the angel with complete openness, and consequently does not conceal her questioning and inner turmoil. Rather, she opens her heart to the God who chose her and she accepts his plan. Dialogue and obedience. Mary realizes that she has received a priceless gift and on her knees, that is, with humility and awe, she continues to listen. There is no better way to listen than "on our knees", since this means not thinking, in our pride, that we already know or have understood what others are about to tell us, but are instead open to the mystery of the other, ready to receive with humility what he or she wants to tell us.

~ Pope Francis

Epiphany - Cont'd from Page 1

Why is this happening so important? Because in it the adhesion of the pagan people to faith in Christ has begun to be fulfilled according to the promise made by God to Abraham, about which the Book of Genesis refers: "By you all the families of the earth shall bless themselves" (Gn 12: 3).

If Mary, Joseph and the shepherds of Bethlehem therefore represent the people of Israel who have welcomed the Lord, the Magi instead are the first of the peoples, also called to be part of the Church, the new People of God established, no longer on ethnic, linguistic or cultural homogeneity, but uniquely on the common faith in Jesus, Son of God.

The Epiphany of Christ, therefore, is at the same time the epiphany of the Church, the manifestation of her universal vocation and mission, of peace and Christian prosperity.

~ Pope Benedict XVI
Angelus Message, January 6, 2007

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Eucharist. A life lived in the Eucharist brings unspeakable joy to one's being amidst trials and tribulations. We receive Jesus in the Eucharist and we receive His light that keeps us going through the many challenges that we encounter. We radiate the light of Jesus to others and by our love and concern, lead them to embrace Him as we pass His light to them. God gave us a mission to reveal Christ to others, and we know that He will not abandon us because we will always feel His light shining in our hearts when we experience hope and joy.

With Christ in us, our joy is new every day. God is with us and He wants everyone to be saved. Thus He will always call us from our old life of sin to a new life with Him. We jour-

ney through the various stages of our life, growing and bearing the losses that increase with time and age. There are days of celebration and sadness, of grace and sin, of realization, consolation and tribulation. But having found the Lord in our search for truth and light, we must believe that He will never abandon us and completely trust that God will always be faithful.

The glory of God is risen among us and we are blessed beyond what we deserve. Jesus, our Redeemer is here. Let us receive Him with great joy and be expectant of His promise in Isaiah: "...you shall be radiant at what you see ...the wealth of nations shall be brought to you," (Is 60:5).

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for

giving us the Star of Hope and Faith that lead us to Your Holy Word, teaching us to know, love, and serve You more each day and continually nourishing as we go through with our daily journey.

As we look back to 2023, we are amazed that You are our God who manifests in our lives with such joy and power that enabled us to prevail the year despite all trials and tribulations. Thank you for the love, mercy and graciousness accorded to us far beyond what we have expected and deserved. You are indeed a marvelous living God. We look at 2024 with excitement and expectant faith, and we pray that all our hopes and plans, both personal and communitarian, be in accord to Your holy will, all for Your greater honor and glory. Amen.

Adapted from www.bldworld.org