

## Missionary Commentary

The Epiphany of the Lord  
January 5, 2025

## Sunday Readings

Isaiah 60:1-6  
Psalm 72: 1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13  
Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6  
Matthew 2:1-12  
[USCCB Link to the Readings](#)

## The Gifts We Give

The beautiful and inspiring season of Christmas continues with this feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. Without doubt most of us know that the word “epiphany” means manifestation or a revelation. The inspiring message line of this feast is that God sent the Son and it was through a baby that the initial mission of manifesting the love of God began. We recall from all the liturgies up until this moment that this manifestation is the result of many revelations before this.

The angel visiting the young Mary invited her participation. The dream of Joseph to not get in the way of the revelation, but to collaborate even though he could not understand how all this could happen. The encounter of Mary and Elizabeth which affirmed each of the two women that what they believed was happening within them, was indeed a reality! Now three wisemen come from a distant land based on their ability to read the stars in the sky. They must find this King. When they arrive, what do they see but an Infant King! The drama continues as their discovery is the object of hate and murder on the part of another king.

All of this is worth meditating on and contemplating to perceive the divine hand in all these mysteries. For me, most of these mysteries lead me to stop in awe of the women and men who believed and followed God’s desire to begin a mission of love in a broken world, in spite of those who seek to destroy this mission and those who promote it.

In the midst of all this action is the baby. The baby named Joshua or as we know him, Jesus. He was completely dependent on Mary and Joseph to protect him and keep him alive, as all babies are. How lovingly Mary and Joseph held Jesus in their arms. How lovingly he was guided into adulthood to listen to the God who calls us to mission.

In my meditations and musings, I could not help but think of all the couples who want to have a baby but for various reasons cannot conceive. How they long and yearn to bring to this world and their families a new life to share their love. I could not also forget the many babies who were killed because Jesus was born. Or the babies that are not welcomed into this world by those who conceived them. They were raised with resentment and sometimes even hate, only to die a horrible, inflicted death. I surprised myself when these thoughts came to me because of the joy and peace of this season. But

*next page*

*continued from previous page*

the horrible and unthinkable are part of the world, and so become part of our mission, too.

May our words, actions and attitudes always be guided by love as we hold the joyful and the painful in our hearts as we live our mission of manifesting God's love. These are the gifts we offer to the Infant King each day.

## **Notes on the Sunday Readings**

### **First Reading**

Isaiah 60: 1-6 — In many sections of the prophet Isaiah words of doom, of suffering of infidelity are emphasized, but this is a most profound reading of hope and good news. Our divine light has arrived and the signs of hope become a reality.

### **Responsorial Psalm**

Psalm: 72: 1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13 — The Son sent by the Father will be acknowledged as the savior of all peoples. He will free everyone from oppression and will be adored by even the foreign nations. But most of all he is the Savior of the poor who have no one to defend them.

### **Second Reading**

Ephesians 3: 2-3a, 5-6 — The Spirit has revealed the saving grace of God to all peoples. This grace is not for just one nation but all who belong to the Body of Christ and are committed to the mission of Christ as was made known through the Gospel.

### **Gospel**

Gospel: Matthew 2: 1-12 This Gospel continues the theme of today's readings. No one is excluded from the call to embrace the teachings of God's Son. Those who lived and knew Jesus are called. Those from distant lands and did not walk with Jesus are still called to believe in Jesus' mission and give their lives that it may be fulfilled for all times.

*Sister Nancy Schramm lived for 32 years in the Amazon area of Brazil. When she returned, she worked for the Diocese of Joliet as the Director of Formation for missionaries who participated in diocesan short-term mission trips. She is a past President of USCMA and currently serves the faith community of the Sacred Heart in Pembroke Township, Illinois.*

Please pray for the missions.  
May God bless you in all the ways you Go Forth...  
Support our work! [Donate online today.](https://www.uscatholicmission.org)



**Go Forth ...** is a service funded by the Catholic Communications Campaign and USCMA, a community of faith leaders engaged in networking, formation, and advocacy for God's mission. All who serve God's mission are welcome. Learn more at [www.uscatholicmission.org](https://www.uscatholicmission.org) or call 202-832-3112.

