



We acknowledge the Dharawal people, traditional owners and custodians of this place. They are part of the world's oldest living human culture, deserving of our deepest respect. May we walk gently on this land.

ST MARY'S TOWERS

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DOUGLAS PARK NSW 2569

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MARRIAGES and BAPTISMS by appointment

MASSES: SUNDAYS and WEEKDAYS

9am - Sunday

6pm - every 3rd Sunday YOUTH/YOUNG FAMILIES

6pm - every 1st Sunday at Menangle

5.15pm - Mondays; Prayers 5pm - Jenkins Chapel

7.15am - Tues-Sat; Prayers 7am, 5.30pm - Jenkins Chapel

ALL WELCOME

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD: YEAR B: 04 JANUARY, 2009

The word 'epiphany' means 'manifestation' or 'showing'.

The gifts brought by the Magi [probably astrologers from Persia] reveal many things about Jesus. The gold signifies his kingship, the frankincense, his priestly role, and the myrrh suggests the spices and ointment with which his body is anointed and wrapped at his death which brought salvation.

In some countries and cultures gifts are given on this feast rather than on Christmas Day.

broken image and a
TIFF (LZW) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.



We have seen the light of his star
and have come to adore the Lord.

Collections three Christmas Masses

1st Collections: \$663.75; 2nd collections: \$524.80

Last Sunday :

1st Collection: \$143.40; 2nd Collection: \$100.30

Thank you for your generosity

WE REMEMBER THE SICK...

Todd McRae; Sue Gay; Troy Koens; Christine Sullivan; Trish Coleman; Margaret Cox; Colin Gannon; Jim Forsyth [lung cancer - brother-in-law of Heather; Stella Harvey [84, broken hip] sister of Val Ross; Noel Trompp; Holly Farrant



ROCK AND ROLL FAMILY EVENT

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 4pm-12pm, IN CHURCH HALL.

SAUSAGE SIZZLE,

ENTERTAINMENT FOR CHILDREN,

ROCK AND ROLL BAND FROM 7pm

Great Raffle Prizes; Adults \$15, Children \$5,

Contacts Naomi Sheil 4632 7250; Venessa Farrant 4630 8115

Proceeds to Juvenile Diabetes Association especially through Campbelltown Hospital

AN EPIPHANY PEOPLE : GOD'S LIGHT TO THE NATIONS

Isaiah 60:1-6; Ps 72 Eph 3:1-12; Matt 2: 1-12

Today's Feast of the Epiphany is perhaps one of the most neglected feasts in the Western Church. Although it's an important holiday in many countries, and in other traditions, Epiphany has simply never caught on in mainstream Australian culture, because it's been eclipsed by Christmas. Epiphany asks the questions: Where do we see God to be present among us? What are the signs of the sacred among us? It is with that quest, that search, that discovery, that we concern ourselves today.

Epiphany is traditionally the feast of the 'Three Wise Men', or the Magi, meaning magicians or astrologers. They appear only once, in this story of Jesus' birth recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, they then disappear from Scripture as suddenly as they first appeared. But the point of their journey remains forever important. They are the first to understand what others could not see: that this is no ordinary child. This Jesus has been born king of the Jews. This Jesus is God among us. For the ancient Church, this 'epiphany' or this exciting new understanding of the Christ was worth celebrating. It still is.

The Gospels are full of moments of epiphany in which we see the divine being made manifest, moments when we see Jesus at work, and we will read of them throughout the coming Epiphany season. These epiphanies are reminders that this Jesus is more than just a friend we can turn to when we are seeking a listening ear, more even than a prophet. As we read of Jesus' journeys throughout Galilee, as we listen to his stories and parables, we see something exciting happening: God is with us, the Divine is made known among us. In the narrative, the Magi, perhaps astrologers, arrived in Jerusalem looking for this special child, and their presence worries Herod, whose scribes remind him that the predicted Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Matthew's birth narrative is colourful. It shows us the drama of the story, and places it in the wider context of God's revelation to the world, but there is also a background of darkness and intrigue, with Jesus' birth arousing fear and jealousy in Herod, who lashed out viciously to prevent any erosion of his power. But the star leads the Magi to the child and we're told they worshipped him, bringing gifts, and then returned home by another route. This story topples down the barriers between people and proclaims that Jesus came into the world for everyone. Isaiah's prophecy lies right at the centre of this story. 'Arise shine for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you...' Faith isn't a private or interior matter; it impels community and life in community. It shows us that mission has to be central to our lives together. A church isn't designed to only be a comforting community for those on the inside, it's designed for the world, and our role is to take our experience of God, our understanding of Emmanuel, God is with us, out into our community.

The church that doesn't look out beyond its own boundaries is sentenced to become a mysterious ghetto existing on the fringe of society, and contributing nothing to its life. To live is to look outward, an outward looking that deals with change. A changing church is a sign of the life within.

Epiphany teaches us that we shouldn't be selective in our thinking about other people; about our ideas of who belongs and who doesn't belong, who are outsiders, and who are insiders. Epiphany teaches us that all we do as a parish in this coming year should be aimed at taking the message of Christmas 'God is with us', our experience of how this is true in our lives out to the world; expanding the boundaries of our community and finding ways to meet our neighbours just where they are, finding ways to live out the gospel message among them, finding ways to push out our comfort zone.

The purpose in our coming together Sunday by Sunday is not just to have a warm fuzzy experience, not only to meet with our friends, important as these things are - but to worship God together in community. In the incarnation we received the greatest gift, the gift of the Christ. That gift moves us to worship, to offer all that we are and all that we have to this gracious mystery through the outpouring of ourselves, of our lives at the feet of the Christ, born for us, Immanuel. Christian worship is the bending of our lives to the grace of God that has become incarnate in the world as Jesus Christ. God is present to us, God has revealed himself to us, God has come to us. Worship isn't just the human projection of our wants, but our fitting response to the presence of God among us.

The discovery of the sacred often comes out of some of the darkest times in our lives. As we come together to worship we should bring all that we have and all that we are to the feet of the Christ child; honest people, people with light and shade, broken people, holy people. It's the least we can give, the least we can do. And as we offer our gifts, as we encounter the Christ child, our lives are transformed, touched by his holiness, by his love. And so as we begin this new year together, let us become an epiphany people. Let us become people who are open to the sacred in our lives, open to epiphanies that help us to understand more about the divine and more about ourselves. Let us become people for whom true worship is central, worship that brings everything we have and everything we are to the feet of the living God in adoration and praise. And then, we'll become people who are empowered to share the light of with those around us.

Lynda McMinn Williamstown Parish