



a Kendall Hunt Company

## Solemnity of the Epiphany, Junior High - RCLB Lectionary



Junior High Session: Isaiah 60:1-6; Matthew 2:1-12

# Opening Prayer

Let us pray.

Jesus our Light, guide us on our journey of faith.

Help us to be light for others.

In the name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen.

# Opening Life Reflection

The theme for today is God's universal gift of salvation. To begin, invite the young people to map out their own journey of faith. Provide paper and pencils and have them mark down the significant moments in their faith journey from their baptism to the present time. Give the young people the opportunity to share their journey with the large group. Discuss:

- How is our life of faith like a journey?
- Who has helped guide you on your faith journey?
- How does Jesus help to light your way?

Allow time for discussion. On today's feast of the Epiphany we remember the journey of the magi. We celebrate that God's gift of salvation is for all people.

# Listening to the Word of God

In today's Old Testament reading listen to how all nations are drawn to God's light.

Read Isaiah 60:1-6.

Allow for silence.

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# Scripture Discussion Starters

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- Why are the people told to rise and shine?
- Who will come to God's light?
- How is the joy of the people expressed in the reading?

In the Gospel today listen to the journey of the wise men from the east.

Read Matthew 2:1-12.

Allow for silence.

- Who are the wise men from the east looking for?
- What does King Herod ask them to do?
- What guides the magi to the newborn king?
- What gifts do they bring to the child?
- Why do the wise men decide not to return to Herod?



## Scripture Background

Provide 2-3 minutes of background information on the readings using the Catechist Background section.

The Solemnity of the Epiphany has a rich tradition all around the world. By translating its name *epiphania*, which means "revelation", we find the rich meaning of today's feast. On this feast we celebrate the revelation of God's saving love in Jesus. The offer of God's salvation is for all people. This is made clear by the presence of the Gentiles found in all of today's readings.

The first reading from the Old Testament reflects the joy felt by the people of Jerusalem after their return from Exile. God's light has come and God's people are delivered. God's saving act is like a beacon of light shining before the entire world, showing the compassion and love of the Lord. Even Gentiles are drawn to God's radiant light, as they stream toward Jerusalem from every corner of the earth.

In today's gospel the wise men from the east are drawn to the Savior by the light of a star. These magi are foreigners. They are Gentiles who have not learned about the Law or the prophets. However, these foreigners find the Christ child and honor him. The gospel today

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shows how the journey of the magi is a journey of faith, guided by the light of God's love. The wise men follow a star, which leads them to Christ the light of salvation.

# **Questions for Deeper Reflection**

- Why did Gentiles find their way to Jesus?
- How did the magi honor the Christ child?
- How does the light of God's love guide people today?

[If you are not going to continue with the doctrinal discussion, proceed to the Gospel in Life.]

# **Doctrinal Discussion Starters**

## **Universal Offer of Salvation**

Today's feast of the Epiphany proclaims that God's gift of salvation is for all people. The word Epiphany means to show forth or to make visible. This feast reminds us that Jesus, the Savior of the world, was made visible to the Magi. Jesus welcomes all those who seek him.

The Catholic Church believes that all are meant to share in God's love. "The Church's essential nature is universal...preaching the Word of God and proclaiming the kingdom throughout the whole world"(AG 1).

- How is Jesus made visible in your life?
- How does the Church work to bring the light of Christ to all people?
- Why do people seek the light of God's love?

# **The Gospel in Life**

How can the journey of the magi be an example for your journey of faith?



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Connecting to Faith First® Legacy Edition

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At Home Family Guide, theme 23

Junior High, Church History, chapters 1 and 2

