

**First Reading:** *Isaiah 60:1-6*

**Response:** **“All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord”** (Ps.71:11)

**Responsorial Psalm:** *Psalm 71:2,7-8,10-13*

**Second Reading:** *Ephesians 3:2-3,5-6*

**Gospel:** *Matthew 2:1-12*

**What is the Epiphany?** A divine revelation of Jesus Christ to the world. Hebrew for ‘Epiphany’ is שְׁכִינָה גְלוּהָ, *Galah Shekinah*, revealing the Presence of God to the world.

**“All nations shall fall prostrate before you”** (Ps.71.11) is represented by the three wise men coming into the Presence of the Lord Jesus Christ; and divine revelation to the gentiles.

In Christ you will **“grow radiant, your heart will rejoice”** (Is.60:4). For **“your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you”** (Is.60:1).

The Christian should be **“overjoyed”** like the kings **“on seeing the star”** (Matt.2:11) and follow it to the full light with **“heart throbbing and full”** (Is.60:4).

Paul sees such blessings as **“graces of God bestowed on me for your sake”** (Eph.3:2).

In living our call to discipleship, how do we use our gifts in service of the Lord, as did the wise men? They **“offered him their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh”** (Matt.2:12).

The Epiphany begins with the revelation of Jesus Christ in his Incarnation. It continues in the mystery of his presence as the Risen Lord in our lives today.

The Lord reveals himself to us today in his **Word**. Are our hearts burning when we hear it? How much do we follow the Bible as our guiding star in the desert of this life? (Matt.2:11).

Jesus is with us always, Emmanuel. Are you with him? The Feast of the Epiphany **celebrates** how he first came and is recognized as our Saviour, Christ the Lord.

How do we find and approach Him? In **Word, Sacrament** and full **Tradition** of the Church?

At Christmas we received God’s gift, his beloved Son. What is our gift to God? Can you be more generous with the Lord? Let this year be one of having a deeper relationship with Christ.

### **FOR THE CHILDREN**

Look at the crib or picture of it. **Where are the wise men? Do they come before or after the shepherds? What is the significance of local shepherds and foreign wise men?**

**What are the wise men (three kings) doing?** They are offering their gifts.

**Why did they come and kneel and offer their gifts? Who is Jesus?**

Epiphany is the time to offer God something. **What are your New Year resolutions?**

### **FOR TEENAGERS** (Shared Christian Praxis)

**What does Epiphany, God’s revelation, mean to you?**

**Has it made any difference to your life and those around you?**

Explain revelation according to teachings of the Church

**How much have you experienced revelation in the Church, an experience of the Lord?**

**What gifts have you to share with the Lord and neighbours and help them know God?**

## **RCIA**

We have seen a great light and we must show the light to the world. Be on fire, burning with zeal. This can grow through experiences of the Lord in Word and Sacrament.

### **LIFE EXPERIENCE: *Reality in our hometown, Pietermaritzburg***

The long awaited baby safe has arrived in Pietermaritzburg! The baby safe is an alternative to dumping unwanted babies in public toilets or rubbish bins. When a mother places her baby in the safe, we are immediately notified by Voice Call. The safe will call 3 numbers and continues to call until one of us responds to the call. As a back-up the safe will sms the 3 numbers once the baby is collected. We then look after him/her until the baby is adopted.



The safe has specific installation requirements. We are currently in negotiation with a church at the bottom of Longmarket Street. This location is perfect as it is central; it's near an informal settlement and best of all it is 600m away from Midlands Medical Centre. The next step forward is creating awareness. To do this we need sponsors for printing flyers, posters, etc. Please contact us if you are able to help us. We need sponsors for the installation of the safe. This will be a big job as the church has a palisade fence around it so we have to build onto the fence. We need to get it installed urgently and we need to get the premises ready. There have been 4 dead babies found in the last 2 weeks. The sooner we get the safe up and going, the sooner we can prevent these deaths.

#### **Urgent needs to finish the premises:**

-Sheets and blankets, shelves, baby bath, baby clothes, bottles, nappies, medicines, etc.

#### **Financial needs:**

-Payment of telephone bill, salary for two full time staff members, medical costs, petrol.

#### **Wish list for the future:**

-Extend premises to save more babies from surrounding areas.

*(N.B.: This notice is abbreviated due to lack of space)*

**Contact:** Rene Morcom 033-3475544. [www.pregnancyassist.co.za](http://www.pregnancyassist.co.za)

## **LITTLE ANGELINA**

Angelina was mystified over the word '*Magi*', in the Gospel. Her father explained how the common word 'magic' comes from '*magi*,' interpreted as 'wise men.' He corrected her pronunciation to be '*maji*', not 'maggie'. Maggie was a name Angelina knew well. It was her great aunt, who created tensions in the family, not by any means of magic but just being cantankerous. Visits from such a person as Maggie, not *Magi*, could dampen the spirit of Christmas. However, that was the adults' problem, not Angelina's. In fact, in the spirit of the *magi* she was happy to give Maggie a Christmas present.

### **IMPORTANT WORD: *Επιφάνια* (Epiphania), Manifestation of God**

The Greek word *Επιφάνια*, *Epiphania* refers to the manifestation of God. Hebrew describes it as *גלה שכינה*, *Galah Shekinah*, which means 'revealing the presence of God.' In the present context, it is the revelation of Jesus to the gentiles. The gentiles are represented by the *magi*, also known as wise men or kings.

Traditionally, the Epiphany is a triptych, three important scenes of manifestations of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, each celebrated on different Sundays. The first is the magi coming to Jesus. The second is the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan, and the third is Jesus' first miracle at the wedding feast of Cana. These are insights into the revelation of the Promised Messiah.

**Watchword:** “*They did him homage. Then opening their treasures, offered him gifts*” (Mt.2:11)

Hebrew: וישתחוּ לוֹ ויפתחוּ אֶת-אוצרותם ויקריבו לוֹ מנחה

*Weyishtaxawu - lo wayiftexu 'eth - 'otsrotem wayaqrivu lo minxah.*

Greek: Προσεκυνησαν αυτω και ανοιξαντες τους θησαυρους αυτον προσηνεγκαν αυτω δωρα

*Prosekunesan auto kai anoiksantes tous thesaurous auton prosenenkan auto dora.*

Latin: **Adoraverunt eum; et apertis thesauris suis, obtulerunt ei munera.**

Portuguese: **O adoraram; e, abrindo os seus tesouros, lhe ofertaram dadivas.**

Spanish: **Lo adoraron; y abriendo sus tesoros, le ofrecieron presentes.**

French: **Et adorerent l'enfant; puis ils ouvrirent leurs bagages et lui offrirent des cadeaux.**

German: **Und beteten es an und taten ihre Schätze auf und schenkten.**

Afrikaans: **En aan Hom hulde bewys. Daarna het hulle hulle reissakke oopgemaak en vir Hom geskenke uitgehaal.**

Zulu: **Zakhuleka kuye zavula amagugu azo zethula iziphopho.**

Xhosa: **Zaqubuda, zamnqula; zaza zathi, zivule iingxowa zazo, zanikela kuye ngeziphopho.**

Sotho: **Mme ba kgumamela ngwana, ba nto bula mathole a bone, ba mo nyehella ka dimpho.**

Irish: **D'umhlaiodar go talamh ag deanamh omois do. Agus d'oscail said a gcisti agus d'ofraladar tabhartais do.**

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## CATECHETICS

### Lesson 5: Doctrine and Catechesis

**Doctrine** comes from the Latin word DOCTRINA which means ‘teachings.’ Catholic Doctrine may be defined as “all the teachings and beliefs that are contained in the message of Jesus Christ. To this end must be added those refinements of teachings that the Church has taught and continues to teach through the unfolding tradition that it has from apostolic times and which she teaches **infallibly** as the one Church founded by Christ” (*The Catholic Encyclopaedia*. p.170).

Not all the teachings of ancient tradition were written. John tells us that he did not write down everything that Jesus did (*Jn.21:25*). The early creed of the Church, like “Apostles’ Creed,” even if finally formulated in the second century as a profession of faith for newly baptized Christians, is rooted in an apostolic core of teaching a generation before. Later through disputes and the need for a deeper understanding, certain dogmas of faith were defined. Dogmas are religious truths contained in the sources of divine revelation (Tradition) and defined by the teaching authority of the Church.

The teaching authority of the Church is called the **MAGISTERIUM**, coming from the Latin word **MAGISTER**, meaning teacher. This authority is seen in the hierarchy namely, the pope and bishops, as successors of the apostles. The *magisterium* is also recognized in the **doctors** of the Church, such as St. Jerome, St. Thomas Aquinas and recognized theological scholars who do research on the faith, leading to newer insights and a deeper understanding of the divine truths. Paul, in apostolic times is recognized as a great teacher, not only to gentile and Jew but even to a Church Council including the pope. Ultimately, the pope does have the last word as the successor of the chief apostle, ensuring the **Apostolicity** of the Church. ‘*Ubi Petrus, ibi ecclesia*’, “where there is Peter, there is the Church.” The Church has to build on the foundation laid by Jesus.

What is taught by the hierarchy is important for the faithful. Their sense of faith, **SENSUS FIDELIUM**, is also authentic. Guided by the Holy Spirit, as believers, they have a supernatural gift of faith which is considered in doctrinal affairs. Ultimately, the Church in its teaching role, **ECCLESIA DOCENS**, has to see itself as a Church, learning and discerning, **ECCLESIA DISCENS** as well, listening to ‘**what the Spirit is saying to the Church**’ (*Rev.3:13*).

Doctrine in the Church is a formal proclamation of what we believe. The apostles never baptized without a profession of faith. The question was: “Do you believe in God the Father Almighty? Do you believe in Jesus Christ his Son? Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Church and so on?” This is the basis of the Apostles’ Creed, belonging to the heart of our Christian Tradition. Our Doctrine (Creed and Teachings) is an authentic pillar of our faith. The Catechism, with the teachings of the faith is as important in our Tradition as the Bible and liturgical books of the Church.

**PILLARS OF CATECHESIS**

<b>SCRIPTURE</b>	<b>LITURGY</b>	<b>DOCTRINE</b>	<b>WITNESS</b>
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**N.B.:** Interestingly, in many countries, the Church in her missionary endeavour, translated the catechism before the bible. In fact, a complete Zulu Catholic Bible is still to be printed, in South Africa, in spite of our long-standing Zulu liturgical books and catechism.

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