



At a Distance – Christmas 2 & Epiphany

Scripture Reference: Matthew 2: 1—12, 13-15, 19-23

“Wisdom Seekers, Wisdom Keepers”

Greetings Relatives, and on behalf of myself, Mona and our Worship Team this morning, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you again to our Circle, and to our Community of Faith. We are indeed blessed by your presence and we treasure the diversity and sacredness that you bring to us.

This morning Blessed Ones, we have an “after-Christmas deal for you, a BOGO...buy one/get one special today.”

Today we are celebrating both the Second Sunday of Christmas and the Feast of the Epiphany. It is technically the 10th Day of the 12 Day Christmastide Season. For those of you counting...so far you should have gifted your beloved the following:

10 Lords a Leaping; 9 Ladies Dancing; 8 Maids a Milking; 7 Swans a Swimming; 6 Geese a Laying...and here is Mona’s favorite...5 Gold Rings. Not to forget the 4 Calling Birds; 3 French Hens; 2 Turtle Doves and the now infamous Partridge in a Pear Tree.

But in addition to celebrating the waning of our 12 Days of Christmastide we are jumping ahead a bit, as The Feast of the Epiphany is this coming Wednesday, January 6th. And we celebrate this beautiful feast day of discovery today with a message entitled:

“Wisdom Seekers, Wisdom Keepers”

Epiphany is a beautiful word with a variety of meanings that all work for us this morning. The English word epiphany is from the Latin and Greek: “epiphania” meaning “to reveal.”

Contemporary meanings and definitions support that translation: Epiphany, “a moment of sudden revelation and insight.” And Epiphany, “manifestation of a Divine or Supernatural Being.” Certainly Saints, both those definitions and meanings are vividly on display in this morning’s Gospel Story from Mark.

Blessed Ones, in our last six weeks together on our Advent, Christmas Eve, Christmastide and now our Epiphany travels together we have enjoyed many learning opportunities together. We learned about waiting and patience. We learned about preparing and doing. We discovered new messages from new Messengers. We learned of - and yearned for - the Great Mystery. And in the Manger, we learned the lessons of humility, simplicity and community, and of being fed together in quietness and a new elegance. In the Christmas Star, The Scout Star, we found our calling to be “God Bearers” and to birth the Divine within us, to be “midwives” to bring the Great Mystery to life, in our own lives and worlds. Like the Christmas Star, filled with Hope, We Shine, We Brighten, We Lead.

The Epiphany Story and characters is a most excellent one on so many levels. We can look at the Giveaway Tradition, the gifting of the Elders to the Sacred Child. But what did they bring? We know yes, the gifts fit for a King; the gold, frankincense and myrrh. The external gifts both brought and presented. But what were the deeper gifts, the more spiritual gifts that The Gifters first cultivated in themselves and then brought and delivered on that Gifting Day?

First, was a deep **yearning to connect** with The Great Mystery. The Gifters were star gazers. They were looking to and learning from Nature that was always and continually speaking to them and leading them. The Sky and the Earth were alive with messages and messengers and when the Christmas Star appeared, The Gifters were ready. Filled with hope, their ongoing Vision Quest dramatically escalated, and they were compelled to move forward. The Gifters realized that “all creation was speaking” to them and they had “their listening ears on.”

Secondly, The Gifters brought with them **patience and tenacity**. That ability to stay the course and be true to their Vision Quest of Connection: when setbacks occurred, when hard decisions emerged and when their hope was challenged.

And thirdly, The Gifters brought with them their **knowledge and experience** that during their Vision Quest of connecting, they were transformed by the Fiery

Alchemy of the Sacred Spirit from the base metals of knowledge and experience into the gold of Wisdom. And in that sacred Vision Quest pursuit to the Great Mystery at that very moment when they saw the Sacred Child -- as Sister Ilia says, "They were caught up in the mystery of Divine Love." Wisdom Seekers were indeed at that moment transformed from Wisdom Seekers to Wisdom Keepers. They birthed what had been gestating for a very long time, and in so doing became one with Mary as "God Bearer" as the Divine Spark that burned in them, guided them, shined for them, and yes led them, became real for them in the eyes and hands and heart of A Child. Now, their Vision Quest was realized. They saw "kingship" demonstrated in a new, simpler, humbler way...a more communal way.

And so, Saints, on this Epiphany we both have the opportunity to give and receive. Like the Wisdom Seekers we have the opportunity today to bring to the manger not only our gold and frankincense and myrrh, but gifts bolder, deeper, more personal, essential, visceral...our yearning to connect with our God...Our Great Mystery, our looking and listening and hearing directions from many Messengers; our patience, our tenacity; our hope. And yes, our knowledge and experience. Our components/our gifts are all blended together and fired by Spirit. Our gifts blended with God's gift, "wrapping us up in that Mystery of Divine Love," yields the Worlds Gift ... Sacred Wisdom.

Here's the equation...simple.

(Connection + Patience + Tenacity + Hope + Knowledge + Experience) + (Mystery of Divine Love) > catalyzed by Spirit < = Sacred Wisdom

And Saints, wrapped in that Gift of Sacred Wisdom we can do anything, we are unstoppable, we are super-heroes.

From the Wisdom of Solomon:

"For Sacred Wisdom is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the Working of God, and an image of God's Goodness. Although she is but one, she can do all things, and while remaining in Herself, she renews all things. In every generation, Wisdom passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God, for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with Wisdom. She is more beautiful than the Sun and excels every constellation of the stars. Compared

with the light, she is found to be superior, for the light is succeeded by the night. But against Wisdom, evil does not prevail. She reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other, and She orders all things well.”

And so, My relatives, on this Epiphany; on this blessed journey to the Sacred Child...gather your gifts...your Vision Quest awaits.

Strap on your **Yearning** to connect with The Great Mystery

Remove you Air Pods and **Listen** to Nature’s Messengers that await you

Tie on **Patience**, secure your **Tenacity**

Pack your **Knowledge** and Roll-up your **Experience**

*Tarp it all with an abiding and deep **Hope***

Your God is waiting quietly, as Sister Ilia says, to “catch you up in the Mystery of Divine Love.” Spirit waits to begin catalyzing the Sacred Reaction.

Your pilgrimage to the Manger continues ... Your Vision Quest awaits

Wisdom Seeker...Wisdom Keeper

For Sacred Wisdom is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the Working of God, and an image of God’s Goodness. Although she is but one, she can do all things, and while remaining in Herself, she renews all things. In every generation, Wisdom passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God, for God loves nothing so much as the person who lives with Wisdom.

Wishing you a blessed Christmastide and a glorious Epiphany journey of hope.