

Children's Liturgy at Home – Epiphany (Yr. B) 3rd January 2021

Preparation

- If you have your own crib figures then place them on a table along with a candle. If you have figures of the three wise Kings it's now time for them to join the crib!
- If you don't have a crib then, in preparation for today, get the children to draw a nativity scene with Mary and Joseph, baby Jesus in the manger, the star, the shepherds and some animals in the stable!
- Remember to draw a picture of the three kings with their special gifts for Jesus!
- If you prefer use a Christmas card or picture of the nativity scene.

Introduction

Today is the feast of the Epiphany. Today we celebrate the day when the good news of the birth of Jesus was brought to the whole world through the visit of the three wise Kings. They followed the star all the way to the stable in Bethlehem, to worship the infant in the manger.

Epiphany refers to the birth of Jesus- the manifestation of God in the world- the special way that God chose to come in to the world to show the great love that He has for all peoples from all over the world. As we look at our crib figures or nativity picture we remember Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus.

As we are gathered at home to pray with our closest family we remember that the Holy Family also prayed together. Even when there was no room at the Inn and they had to make do with the stable, Mary and Joseph praised God as they looked after the baby Jesus.

God has given us our families, to pray together and look after each other. We do this knowing that God is with us helping us always especially when times are difficult.

Let's begin our prayers:

Make the Sign of the Cross – a sign of the love God has for us.

An adult lights the candle.

Penitential Act

Adults and children think about how you have behaved in the past week. Especially when your daily routines are different just now. Have you shown patience to those around you? Have you been kind and helpful even when you don't feel like it and it's difficult?

Lead the children in singing the "Sorry Song".

We are sorry, *(To the Tune of Frere Jacques)*
Truly sorry,
Heal us Lord,
In Your love,
Help us to do better,
Help us to be kinder.
Forgive us,
Forgive us.

Gloria (Sung)

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to His people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
Almighty God and Father,
we worship You, we give You thanks,
we praise You for Your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ,
only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
You take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
You are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For You alone are the Holy One,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of the Father.

Amen

All stand to welcome the Gospel singing the **Gospel Acclamation:**

(Sing to the tune of 'If You're Happy and You Know It)

"Alleluia, alleluia, praise the Lord,
Alleluia, alleluia, praise the Lord,

As we listen to the story,
let us praise him for his glory.
Alleluia, alleluia, praise the Lord."⁽¹⁾

Gospel (Matthew 2:1-12)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

Explain and demonstrate – make three crosses: one on your forehead, one on your lips and one on your heart. In this way we think God's word, speak God's word, and keep God's word in our hearts as we say together:

"Glory to You, O Lord."

Gospel

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, there came three wise Kings from the east. When they reached Jerusalem they asked:

"Where is the newborn King of the Jews?
We have seen His star in the east,
and we have come to worship Him."⁽²⁾

On hearing this King Herod was very disturbed and he sent for the leaders of the Jewish people and asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

They told him:

"In Bethlehem of Judea."⁽²⁾

Then Herod questioned the wise Kings asking them the exact time they had seen the star in the east. They told him and Herod said:

"Go to Bethlehem and find out all you can about this child. When you have found Him, come back and tell me, so that I may go, too, and worship Him."⁽²⁾

So the Kings went to Bethlehem, following the star that went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where Jesus was.

They went into the stable and found the infant Jesus lying in the manger with his mother Mary looking after Him. Overcome with joy the Kings knelt down and worshipped Jesus and they presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The Kings were warned by an angel in a dream not to go back to Herod and so they returned to their own countries by another way.

“The Gospel of the Lord.”

All reply: **“Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Lead a Discussion on the Gospel

Ask the children what happened in the Gospel today?

How and where did the three kings find Jesus? (They followed a bright star in the sky that stopped over the stable in Bethlehem, where the baby Jesus lay in a manger).

What were the Kings' names? (Melchior, Caspar, and Balthazar).

What presents did the Kings bring for Jesus? (Presents fit for a King- gold was brought by Melchior to symbolise that Jesus is a King. Caspar brought Frankincense – like the incense burned in church, this expensive item recognises the infant King's holiness. Finally, Balthazar brought Myrrh, an expensive and highly perfumed ointment that was used after death in the preparation of the body for burial. It is symbolic of the suffering and death of Our Lord).

What other King did the wise Kings visit before they found Jesus and what did he ask them to do? (They visited King Herod to ask him where they would find Jesus. King Herod, who secretly wanted to kill Jesus, told them to come and visit him again on their return and tell him where to find Jesus. Herod told them that he wished to go and worship Jesus, but this was a lie).

Who warned the Kings not to go back to tell Herod where to find Jesus? (An angel appeared to them in a dream and told the Kings not to go back to Herod).

Prayers of the Faithful

Dear Jesus, Look after all of Your family here on earth, especially those who are poor, homeless, or hungry.

Lord, in Your mercy.

All reply: **"Hear our prayer."**

Dear Jesus, You are our God and our King. Keep us always close to You. Protect us from all harm and all evil and especially at this time, bring healing to those who are ill.

Lord, in Your mercy.

All reply: **"Hear our prayer."**

We now pray together saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Amen.

We can also say the following prayer as a **Spiritual Communion**.

(Anyone can do this at any age. Even if you have not made your first sacramental Holy Communion, or are unable to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion you can still make a spiritual communion by saying this prayer)

Spiritual Communion (Prayer of St. Alphonsus Liguori)

My Jesus,
I believe that You are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my soul.
I embrace You as if You were already come,
and I unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You.
Amen.

Conclusion

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

References

1. The Complete Children's Liturgy Book. Katie Thomson, published by Kevin Mayhew. P349
2. Sunday. Book of Readings. The Lectionary Adapted for Children (Yr B). UK Publisher Viewpoint Resources Direct. P16-17.