

Peace is...the Light of Christ

Isaiah 60: 2 ***“See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; but upon you the Lord shines, and over you appears his glory.”***

Matthew 2: 11 ***“They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts.”***

Reflection: ***What are the gifts that I offer?***

Am I trying to grow in the virtues, the true gifts that I can offer to Jesus, my Lord and Savior: humility, generosity, patience, kindness, joy, peacefulness, forgiveness, love? Do I see the presence of God in the lowly and marginalized, in the unborn?

What is epiphany?

Where there was darkness, there will be glorious light. The revelation of God, which is Jesus, is made known to us and to all generations, that we may know the wondrous glory to which God calls us! Heaven with Jesus, our King!! The lowly, the smallest, the weakest will be greatly blest, since God treasures what the world discredits and raises to remarkable heights those who are bowed down.

What is the significance that Jesus came to us as a baby?

Our God has come as a helpless child, laid to rest in an animals' feeding trough, surrounded by humble shepherds and loving parents. Jesus who feeds the world with his own flesh and refers to himself as the *bread of life* was born in Bethlehem, a tiny town whose name means “*house of bread*”. In a world where the lives of children are abused and aborted by the hundreds of thousands, we cry out for justice. The faithful followers of Jesus recognize God's life within those too small to have a voice. We, who believe, celebrate epiphany, the revelation of God in an unborn baby, in a child, in the physically and mentally challenged, in the aged, in the weak and suffering. We must recommit ourselves to speaking up for those whom society discards and tramples underfoot. We must commit ourselves to working for justice and peace, beginning within our own homes and continuing in our community until we can proclaim “*Lord, every nation on earth will adore you!*” (Ps 72)

It is a mystery that God humbled Himself to become one of us, even to experience life from the moment of conception in His mother's womb. He became vulnerable and completely dependent upon His parents, just like all of us as babies and young children. God loves us so much that He became one of us, to experience life as we know it, to be intimately involved with us, and then to suffer for us so that we could spend eternity with Him.

It is shocking to pose the question, “What if Jesus had been aborted?” His mother was unmarried and surely was shamed by others for her condition. Even her own betrothed had questions about whether to marry her or not. Jesus' birth was certainly not “convenient.” His parents were poor and could have said they “couldn't afford to have a child.” Mary may have had “other plans” for her life. These are some of the reasons people give for having abortions. Yet, when we look to Jesus our light, we realize that whether humble or sublime, God has plans for every child who is conceived. We are reminded that all life is sacred and precious to God! It is up to us to speak out on behalf of life.

Action:

- **Practice virtue. Offer it to the Lord. Recognize God's presence in each person.**
- **Learn the gruesome truth about abortion, and spread the truth. Aborted babies deserve to have their story told, that all will know what really happens.** For video, go to www.ObamaMustSee.com. At www.PriestsforLife.org, or www.YouTube.com, look under “abortion.” (links available at www.sjbcatholicparish.org/peace-justice.php)
- **Commit to speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves. Fight against legal abortion. Support agencies that help unwed mothers. Pray, Pray, Pray.**