

treated the request for information about the city of His birth with less interest than Herod. Perhaps they didn't take the Magi seriously (who follows a star, anyway?) The Jewish leadership's rejection of Jesus was foretold by Isaiah and (as Paul told us) the Gentiles have become heirs of the kingdom. This meant that the Magi were the most significant people to visit Jesus, and the only leaders to see Him until He came to the temple at the age of 12. The light had come to the darkness but the darkness could not comprehend Him.

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

⑨ O God our Father, Your Son grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with You and men. Bless, guide, and govern the children and young people of Your Church by Your Holy Spirit that they may grow in grace and in the knowledge of Your Word. Grant that they may serve You well and usefully, developing their talents not for their own sake but for the glory of God and the welfare of their neighbors. Protect and defend them from all danger and harm, giving Your Holy angels charge over them.

O Father most loving, grant that we who are under the power of sin, may in Christ be redeemed and regenerated both in body and soul, and that we may always be Your obedient servants. Empower us by Your Spirit to perform the works necessary for repentance, and in faith do Your will with a glad heart and a pure mind.

Establish the reign of the Prince of Peace over the nations of the Earth. Visit with Your Mercies Your whole creation and every commonwealth of people, and, that all may be saved and none lost, bring them to the obedience of that Holy Child Whom You sent for the redemption of all mankind, even Your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh. Let the light of His life: His Word, doctrine, and creed; His miracles, signs and wonder; His birth, ministry and character; His Passion, death and Resurrection, be that light of divine truth which will show the way to all.

For our sick, our wounded, our hurt, our troubled, our fallen, and our absent fellow believers we pray. Grant them whatever they may need: soundness of body, strength of faith, or security of assurance; and grant them all in Christ assurance of salvation.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (**Time of silent prayer.**)

Hear us, O Father, direct and govern our hearts, and bring us to eternal life, for we establish our faith in our brother Jesus Christ.

© Amen.

## EPIPHANY

### Chant Tone



### Introit

I will cause your name to be remembered in all genera-tions;\* therefore nations will praise you forever and — ever.

Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of up-rightness;\* you have loved righteousness and hated | wickedness.

Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your com-panions;\* your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and — cassia.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\* and to the Holy — Spirit; as it was in the be-ginning,\* is now, and will be forever. — Amen.

I will cause your name to be remembered in all genera-tions;\* therefore nations will praise you forever and — ever.

(Antiphon, Psalm 45:17;  
Psalm 45:6-8a;)

### Collect of the Day

O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in Heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

### Gradual

Praise the Lord, all — nations!\*

Extol Him, all — peoples!

For great is His | Love toward us,\*

and the faithfulness of the Lord endures for — ever.

Ascribe to the Lord the glory | due His name;\*

bring an offering and come in | to His courts!

(Psalm 117; 96:8)

**ENTRANCE PRAYER:** O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ, we praise and adore You for choosing us in Him before the foundation of the world. We cannot understand how this is possible, but we believe it because of the clear testimony of Your Word. You destined us in Love to be Your children through Christ, according to the purpose of Your will. Empower us with Your Holy Spirit to bear witness to the Light that has come into the world. We enter this new calendar year, in the name of Him Whose Light still shines to all the world for the salvation of as many as will believe. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

**JANUARY 6TH IS THE HISTORICAL DATE OF THE VISIT OF THE MAGI, A DAY WE CALL EPIPHANY.** We don't have much information about these people, the Magi. We are given very little data about them in Scripture and there aren't any external sources. We have made a number of assumptions over the years, most of which are probably wrong. They are a mystery , even to the facts surrounding their ability to follow a star. The Jewish Leaders and the High Priest weren't even curious why Herod wanted to know the place of the birth of the "King of the Jews." They missed out on the ability to celebrate His appearance in the world. The Magi were the first of the most important people to worship the Savior and they were Gentiles. The leaders didn't see Jesus until He was 12.

#### **THEME OF THE DAY:**

Visit of the Magi

#### **INTROIT**—(Antiphon: Psalm 45:17;) Psalm 45:6-8

Today, our Lessons are as old as the Church. We seem to have known the date of the Magi visit from the first. The church celebrated this date long before Christmas. This Introit however was added in 2008. Psalm 45 was written by the sons of Korah. It speaks of the Messiah as a Prince, (who is therefore visited by the king.)

#### **COLLECT**

This Collect is also from the ancient church. In it we command God for leading "the nations" (Gentiles) to the Savior, by the miracle of a star. We ask to be lead in that miracle of faith to that wonder of Heaven.

#### **OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**—Isaiah 60:1-6

Zion was to be glorified by the coming of her Savior. Jesus is the light that leads everyone. Kings would come to the brightness of His dawn, of His Epiphany. Great multitudes of Gentiles came from all over the world to bring their gold and incense to praise the Lord. There is a manner in which this prophecy from Isaiah can be a prophecy of the Magi, because perhaps the Magi used these verses to follow the star to Jesus. It is, a much larger prophecy concerning the acceptance of those who see-the-light, (John used the imagery of Jesus as the "Light") and are drawn to Him for salvation. Salvation is described as starting with the kings and working down to the people.

#### **GRADUAL**—Psalm 117:1-2a, 96:8

The Gradual was added to our worship in 1982. Psalm 117 (a two verse Psalm) is a general song of praise for all God has done for us. Psalm 96 was sung as the Ark was moved into Jerusalem. It looks beyond that event to the reign of the Christ and especially when the Gentiles will join in the celebration of the kingdom.

#### **EPISTLE LESSON**—Ephesians 3:1-12

Paul was reflecting on his life as a messenger of the mystery of Christ. The mystery is that Jesus Christ, the Godman was born into the world to be the Savior of all who would believe. It is God's universal plan that everyone, Jew and Gentile who believe in Him would have salvation. It is significant that we remember that Paul became the ambassador to the Gentiles by God's call. He often lamented the rejection of the Gospel by the chosen people.

#### **GOSPEL LESSON**—Matthew 2:1-12

The salvation of the world in the form of a Child is concealed and yet well known. Jesus was a Child both hated and loved. The leadership from among His own people knew the place where He was to be born, but they