

Inspire

ST JAMES & ST BONIFACE,
MID DEVON PARISH,
NR_10_02-01-22



EPIPHANY WEEK - SECOND WEEK OF CHRISTMAS

On Sunday, January 2, the **Second Sunday of Christmas** is celebrated, with the beginning of John's Gospel and its poetic images of light and the Word.

On Thursday, the Epiphany of the Lord is celebrated as a Holy Day of Obligation.

Sunday next is the **Baptism of the Lord**. We hear the Lord say in the first reading from **Isaiah**, "Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one with whom I am pleased, upon whom I have put my spirit." Those words are echoed in the reading from **Luke's Gospel**, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." This feast marks the end of the Christmas season and the beginning of Ordinary Time on the Church calendar.

DAILY PRAYER THIS WEEK

This week is a time with two special days. Both celebrations offer an "epiphany," an understanding and insight into the essence of who Jesus really is. When the Wise Men visit the poorest of families and find the baby Jesus, they have a clearer idea of what kind of king he will be.

At the Baptism of the Lord, Jesus is baptized and the skies open and the voice of God proclaims, "You are my beloved Son." More than just a prophet, this special relationship with God is made manifest in that moment.

How can we make this week a special one as the Christmas season draws to a close? In some parts of the world daylight is plentiful right now, but for many of us the days are short and the dark of night surrounds us many hours each day. This could be the week to reflect on that

darkness and the light that Jesus brings into our hearts.

Each morning as our feet touches the floor next to our beds, we can open our hands briefly in the darkness and ask God to show us the light in our lives. Gratitude is a wonderful way to pray and to recognize the light we sometimes don't notice in our lives. Maybe in this final week of Christmas, we can light a candle at dinner and remember a special blessing we have been given or something we are grateful for in our lives.

Dear Lord, You came to your disciples when they felt alone on the stormy waters and comforted them with your presence. Be with me today and let my heart be touched by the love you so lavishly give to me. Let me remember to turn to you in my fears and darkness and know that you will heal me.

See "Weekly Guide for Daily Prayer" on the Creighton University's Online Ministries web site: <http://www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html> used with permission.

OUR BAPTISM – A CALL TO LIFE

"God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another.

I have my mission - I never may know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next.

Somehow, I am necessary for His purposes, as necessary in my place as an Archangel in His. -- If, indeed, I fail, He can raise another, as He could make the stones children of Abraham.

Yet I have a part in this great work; I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.

He has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do His work; I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it, if I do but keep his commandments and serve Him in my calling."

Thus speaks St John Henry Newman, and it is the call to life for all of us, implicit in our baptisms.

Maranatha ("Come, Lord!") - "Amen Come Lord.

BREAD OF LIFE

When all the land of Egypt was famished the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said to all the Egyptians, 'Go to Joseph...' ^{Genesis 41[55]}

The Lord said to Moses. 'Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day.' ^{Exodus 16[4]}

And over the table of the bread of the Presence they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put upon it the plates, the dishes for incense, the bowls, and the flagons for the drink offering; the continual bread shall be on it. ^{Numbers 4[7]}

Strengthen your heart with a morsel of bread, and after that you may go. ^{Judges 19[5]}

He gave them bread from heaven in abundance. ^{Psalms 105 [40]}

I will satisfy their poor with bread. ^{Psalms 132[15]}

All her people groan as they search for bread; they trade their treasures for food to revive their strength. ^{Lamentations 1 [11]}

Who of you if their children ask for bread would give them a stone? ^{Matthew 7 [9]}

And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed, and broke it and gave it to them, and said. 'Take, this is my body.' ^{Mark 14 [22]}

By the Sea of Tiberias... Jesus then stepped forward, took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish. This was the third time that Jesus showed himself to them after rising from the dead. ^{John 21 [1-3]}

They [the disciples on the road to Emmaus] told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread. ^{Luke 24[35]}

And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts. ^{Acts 2[46]}

Jesus then said to them. '...my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him. 'Lord, give us this bread always.' Jesus said to them. 'I am the bread of life: the one who comes to me shall not hunger.' ^{John 6 [32-5]}

THREE YOUNG TREES



Once upon a time three young trees were growing side by side in a huge plantation. With typical youthful enthusiasm, one hoped to be used in the building of some mansion, so that his grain and quality would be admired by the great and famous.

The second hoped to form the tallest mast on the most beautiful ship, thus gaining full attention as it sailed into any port.

The third hoped to be part of some big public spectacle, well out in the open, so that passers-by would stop and look on in wonder.

The reality of the trees future was this.

The first was cut down and part of it was used to make a trough for animals and it later became a manger in a stable.

The second was cut down and part of it was used to make a very simple fishing boat that spent a lot of time tied up on the shores of Galilee.

The third was cut down and part of it was used to form the beam of a cross, which was used for crucifixion.