

Epiphany Reflections

Faith Formation Class

Celebration of Epiphany

January 6- Ash Wednesday



- January 6, the Church celebrates **Epiphany** which is **12 nights** after the celebration of Jesus' birth.
- Epiphany *is a celebration of God manifesting as the baby Jesus and revealing Himself to the world.*
- The holiday also marks the **day the Magi**, or the three kings, visited the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. **Jesus' baptism** is also celebrated during **Epiphany**.
- The **Bible** tells us that when the **Magi (Wise Men)** who had traveled from afar saw Jesus, they fell down and worshiped Him. *The Magi had an epiphany, or a sudden insight into the true nature of something. They realized that they were in the presence of God.*

What Is An Epiphany?

- Epiphany - *a sudden, intuitive perception of or insight into the reality or essential meaning of something.*
- When you look at something that you may have known about for a long time, and suddenly you realize that it is very special, much more meaningful than you've ever acknowledged; then *at that moment, you've had an **epiphany**. You've uncovered something **that was there all along***, but was hiding, in a sense, just below the surface. It wasn't so obvious. It took a second look.

The Assignment

Since September 2023, Bethlehem has embarked on a series of studies (Faith Formation classes) designed to encourage you to seek a deeper walk with the Master.

- In 300 words or less describe an epiphany moment that you may have experienced during this time. The moment could have occurred during a class/group discussion, lecture presentation, from a handout, or your personal time with God.
- 1. What spiritual concept or clarity of a text, Scripture, etc. was revealed to you?
- 2. What was said in a lesson that caused you to seek a deeper understanding of His Word?
- 3. How did the lesson give you a new insight into the nature and work of God?
- 4. What was said that made the Scripture have more meaning for you?
- 5. If a Scripture blessed you, please include the Scripture.
- *Please note that the above questions are given to guide you in exploration of your thoughts for writing your reflections/dovations.

Getting Started



- **Be prayerful** -- Before you put pen to paper, or start typing, **pray**. Ask God to tell you what He would have you to write about. What message does He want you to impart?
- **Pick one topic** -- After intensely praying about what to write, pick one topic that comes to mind and be very focused on that one topic.
- **Keep it short** -- Your reflection/devotional should be no more than one page, or 300 words.
- **Know your audience** -- Write your devotional/reflection with Bethlehem's disciples in mind. If it helps, write your devotional as if you're writing it to a dear friend.
- **Check your facts** -- Make sure, if you are quoting biblical scripture that you not only check the scriptures to make sure you are not taking something out of context, and that you are quoting it correctly, but make sure you are using a relevant verse to support your devotional/reflection.
- **Inspire action** -- Ask the readers to do something at the end of your message in your closing paragraph as they await their epiphany. That action will depend on what your message was about. End with a very short prayer, but keep it related to the message.
- **Be yourself** -- Remember to be yourself. You're not perfect -- no human is -- and that is perfectly okay. Grammar isn't as important as your message.
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Writing the Devotional/Reflection

- Each of the three parts of a devotional has a special function.
- **The Scripture or concept:** a short passage from the Bible forms the basis for the devotional. It communicates a principle that is reinforced elsewhere in scripture, too.
- **The Illustration:** the body of the devotional that presents an authentic life situation and connects it to the principle. (This is where you would describe your epiphany to the audience.)
- **The Takeaway:** also called the “application,” this element gives the reader a thought to ponder, a prayer to pray, or an action step to take in order to apply the devotional’s scriptural principle.

Date To Submit for Publication

- Please submit your Devotional/Reflection on February 9, 2024
- Submit to: faisonb@bethlehemofalexandria.org
- 703-360-5472

Questions/
Concerns/
Comments

