

January 7-8, 2017
The Epiphany of the Lord – (Little Christmas)
Isaiah 60:1-6 Ephesians 3:2-6 Matthew 2:1-12

Some got it right, some got it wrong. Risking life and limb by using the recent Presidential Election as an example, a whole lot of people are now reviewing and revising what they thought they knew and understood about people's circumstances and the American voter. Some are smiling that their beliefs and understandings were validated; others are shaking their heads wondering how they could have been so wrong in what they thought they knew. In both instances, people are recognizing that something important has occurred; the ground has shifted and cannot be ignored. With the arrival of **Epiphany**, there is the liturgical acknowledgment that even the leading politicians of 2000+ years ago sensed that something was changing during the Incarnational experience of Jesus' birth. Represented by the 'worldly' Magi, the Gospel of Matthew chides the people of long-ago Israel for not recognizing the prophetic child right under their noses...when even OTHER people of prominence could see and discover what was unfolding. Once again, DREAMS play a role, the mysterious counsel of God warning the Magi 'not to return to Herod'; we (like with Joseph's dreams) are encouraged to not dismiss the peculiar thoughts that persistently nag for our attention. Lastly, the imagery of a STAR is offered as a celestial Garmin or MapQuest by which the Magi were able to find Mary, Joseph and Jesus. Whether there was an astronomical/scientific bright burst of light or not, what is most important is that those who were WISE 'sensed' that they were being led and made a choice to follow that 'sense' to see where it would lead. In the same way that someone pursues a professional choice of theater, music, Olympic athleticism, military service, science or even a vocation to priesthood or religious life, so the imagery of a STAR is a reminder that God has individually created us with unique gifts, skills and abilities by which we can assist him and help the world be a fuller more marvelous place than if we try to be someone we are not. Following our own STAR, whether perceived in a dream or just intuition or something that we have always FELT, we can discover more than we could ever imagine. Trial and error helps, sometimes we get it right, sometimes we get it wrong...but eventually the Magi found what they were seeking...and with trust in God, so will we.

Welcome to the first full weekend of 2017, thank you for sharing it with our Santa Clara community. As the Christmas Season comes to an end this week, our home will look a bit empty next Saturday & Sunday...cleaner...but emptier without the poinsettias and forest of trees that have been here since Thanksgiving weekend. Thank you to all who contributed poinsettias and monetary donations by which we could offset the expenses of wreaths, plants and trees, your generosity fostered a whole bunch of family pictures being snapped in front of what we were able to create. For those of you who like to try your hand transplanting our foliage into your own yards, the poinsettias and trees will be put outside on Monday/Tuesday of this week and are available to be claimed by you...some of them may take root in your soil...some of them will probably not recover after a month of being inside...but you are free to claim them if you wish. As you pack away the holidays of 2016 and face the fresh year of 2017 please remember that you are loved. FKB