**Children’s liturgy – Epiphany of the Lord (Year B)**

**Preparing the worship space**

Colour: white

Props: coloured card or paper cut into the shape of a present

**Song suggestions:** We three kings (788, Celebration Hymnal for Everyone)

**Welcome:** Today we hear about some people who travelled a long way to see the baby Jesus and who brought him gifts. We are going to think about the gifts that we too can offer Jesus.

**Opening prayer:** God of light, your star led the wise men to Jesus. Guide us as we try to follow Jesus in our lives and help us to be kind and share our gifts with others. Amen.

**First reading (optional):** Isaiah 60:1-6

**Psalm:** Ps 71:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13 r. cf. 11

**Gospel acclamation** *everyone stands and sings the acclamation together.*

**Gospel:** Matthew 2:1-12

Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea, during the time when Herod was king. Soon afterwards, some men who studied the stars came from the east to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the baby born to be king of the Jews? We saw his star when it came up in the east, and we have come to worship him.”

When King Herod heard about this, he was very upset, and so was everyone else in Jerusalem. He called together all the chief priests and the teachers of the Law and asked them, “Where will the Messiah be born?”

“In the town of Bethlehem in Judea,” they answered. “For this is what the prophet wrote:

‘Bethlehem in the land of Judah,
you are by no means the least of
the leading cities of Judah;

 for from you will come a leader
 who will guide my people Israel.’”

So Herod called the visitors from the east to a secret meeting and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem with these instructions: “Go and make a careful search for the child, and when you find him, let me know, so that I too may go and worship him.”

And so they left, and on their way they saw the same star they had seen in the east. When they saw it, how happy they were, what joy was theirs! It went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. They went into the house, and when they saw the child with his mother Mary, they knelt down and worshipped him. They brought out their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh, and presented them to him.

Then they returned to their country by another road, since God had warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod.

*(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details overleaf\*)*

**Gospel reflection:** What do you remember from that story?

The wise men travel a long way to see Jesus. Where do they go first?

Why might they have gone to a palace? Where do they find Jesus in the end?

The wise men might have expected the young king would be found in a palace in the most important city, but instead they find the child Jesus in a simple house in a small town.

Do you think they were surprised to find an important king in such a humble place?

Where might we find Jesus today?

Jesus has promised he is with us always. We can find Jesus when we gather together for Mass and when we pray and read the Bible. We can find Jesus in each other and in those in need. Let’s all try to look out for Jesus!

When they find Jesus, the wise men offer him presents. Can you remember what the gifts they bring are?

How does it feel when you are given presents? What is the best gift you have ever been given?

Can you think of a time when you gave someone else a gift? How does it feel when you give somebody a gift? Does it make you happy? Why?

The gifts that the wise men gave were very expensive. Do we have to spend lots of money on presents to make people happy?

We give gifts to people who are special to us. Just like the wise men we can also give gifts to Jesus to show him that he is important in our lives.

Unlike the wise men we don’t have to spend lots of money. We already have special gifts that we can offer.

Some of us are good at singing or dancing, some of us can draw pictures or tell stories well. Some of us are kind, or funny, or able to listen. Some of us are good at sharing or helping others. These are all gifts.

What other gifts like this can you think of? What gifts do you have?

What gift would you offer to Jesus?

**Intercessions** *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

The wise men offered their gifts to Jesus. Together we pray that we may all share in the wonderful gifts that God has given us:

We pray for world leaders: that like the wise men, they may be guided by God to do what is right. Lord, hear us…

We pray for people around the world who are poor: that they may receive the gift of hope and be able to change their lives for the better. Lord, hear us…

We pray for our parish, families and friends: that we may recognise Jesus in our world today and all share our gifts with others. Lord, hear us…

**Closing prayer:** God of love, guide us to do what is right and to use our gifts to change the lives of others for the better. Amen.

**Activity suggestions**

Share the activity sheet with the children. Ask the children to colour in the illustration and to draw in the gift that they would like to give to Jesus. Fill

Give the children a present-shaped piece of paper or card (square with a bow on top) and ask them to write or draw on it what their gift to Jesus would be.

Ask the children to write a list of all the gifts that they have to share with the world eg kindness, helpfulness, love, good at music. Then ask them to say thank you to God for each of these gifts in prayer.

Ask them to go home and share all that they have heard and thought about today and what they think is one of their particular gifts. During the week ask them to use that gift – whether it is singing a song for someone, drawing a picture, or being kind to someone – to show that we all have a gift that we can offer.

\*Gospel passage taken from:

Good News Translation® (Today’s English Version, Second Edition)

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