



## Things to Ponder

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## The Epiphany Of The Lord

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Dear Parish Family,

**“Rise up in splendor! Your  
light has come, the glory  
of the Lord shines upon you.”  
(Isaiah 60, 1)**

Imagine emerging from the cloud-shrouded valley on your steep uphill hike from the desert near Jericho to the hills surrounding Jerusalem. Light radiates from the city as if there is glowing presence within—more brilliant than the reflected light of the sun. This prophecy reflects the hope desperately desired by a people who have returned from Exile only to find their homeland (and all that they called holy) in ruins. The **glory** of the Lord is God’s very presence! Jerusalem is a name which means abode of peace. In both Hebrew and Arabic the common greeting between people contains the root word for peace (*shalom...salem*). To this day, the city of Jerusalem is regarded as *holy* by three great mono-theistic religions.

- Jews see it as the *City of David* and the place of the destroyed *temple*.
- Christians revere it as the land of Jesus’ saving death and resurrection.
- Muslims honor the *rock* where Ibrahim was to sacrifice his son.

There is a special *presence* in that holy city; there is also palpable tension between and within the various religious groups. Whereas Judaism and Islam have profound respect for the God whose name is great and have strong racial and ethnic identities, Christianity is based on the almost scandalous belief that God became man. Belief in this mystery of the **incarnation** enabled Christianity to grow beyond geographic, racial, and ethnic boundaries. The *radiance* prophesied by Isaiah was discerned by the wise men from the East and is meant to glow from all who welcome Christ into their hearts. In their honor, it is traditional to bless our homes today with blessed chalk, in the following fashion:

**20+C+M+B+17**

Can you guess the significance of these symbols? May we continue to radiate God’s

presence by the manner of our lives!

Blessed Epiphany,

*Rev. Bill Foley*

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