

A close-up photograph of water droplets on a dark, reflective surface. The droplets are of various sizes and are scattered across the frame. In the center-left, there is a bright, circular reflection of a light source, creating a shimmering effect. The overall tone is dark and moody, with the light reflecting off the water droplets and the surface.

EPIPHANY

PUBLIC MANIFEST// EPIPHANY 2011

EPIPHANY

Epiphany [ɪˈpɪfənē] noun: the manifestation of Christ to the world;
a moment of sudden revelation or insight.

And you thought Christmas was long gone. Epiphany is the celebration of the manifestation of Christ to the world as represented by the Magi in Matthew 2. As the hinge point between the joy of Christmas (Christ has made a home among us in our world!) and the preparation of Lent (An invitation to walk with Jesus unto His death), Epiphany transitions us to manifest the person of Christ within our hearts and outwards into our world.

Robert Webber writes, "Now I am to be a manifestation of Christ. My part is to respond, to say yes to the calling, to commit my life to be a center through which the Epiphany could be extended beyond the crib to the world of my everyday experience." Manifestation invokes the idea of 'making public' that which embodies us. In other words, we, the Church of Jesus, make known that which we hold within us most deeply. Simply put, we live to make the person of Christ known in a gracious, irresistible, warm, loving manner to all we meet. Welcome, 3rd Place, to the season of Epiphany.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY

At a fixed point each day, light a candle as a welcome reminder that God's Spirit dwells as Light within us and throughout every corner of the world. Ask the Spirit to open your spirit to the presence of God in your life as you meditate on the Jesus Prayer and practice hospitality with your neighbors.

EPIPHANY

CHRIST MANIFEST IN US: THE JESUS PRAYER

"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me." One of the most ancient cries of the Church, this prayer is adapted from the cry of the publican in Luke 18, and has developed into a rhythm of continuous interior prayer of the heart, with the name of Jesus constantly repeated, desiring union with Christ as one moves throughout the day. A few suggestions in how to use this prayer:

- Begin and end your current prayer life with the Jesus Prayer.
- Recite the prayer slowly as if you were standing before Jesus Himself.
- Repeat the prayer throughout your day, in the variety of activities and moods you find yourself in, or on a set schedule such as the hour chime on your watch.
- Seek to make this a prayer from the heart and not repetitious words from your lips.

EPIPHANY

CHRIST MANIFEST THROUGH US: THE PRACTICE OF HOSPITALITY

"Hospitality evangelism is the kind of manifestation that may draw a stranger to the gospel into the very heart of Christ" (Robert Webber). Standing in stark contrast to the isolation and disconnection of our individualistic lives, hospitality can become a practice that welcomes the alienated (family, friend, neighbor, stranger) into our lives, opening ultimately into the very heart of God. A few suggestions in how to practice hospitality:

- Consider whether you can invite someone with you wherever you go.
- Who is near you? How can you draw them into the heart of Christ?
- Practice hosting others in the spaces most dear to you.
- Discipline yourself to evangelize through service, not merely with words.

"God has chosen to make known...the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1:27)