

Scripture Prayer For The Week



Artwork Dorothy Woodward

"Once...
when Jesus...
was praying alone..." Luke 9:18

The Epiphany of the Lord Year A

We Gather: In the prayer space, have the bible opened at the Gospel reading. A white cloth covers the table. Three gifts wrapped in gold, silver, red - or objects symbolising the three gifts could be placed around the bible. A white candle could be lit as the gathering prayer is said.

Leader: Today a light will shine upon us
All: The Lord has come amongst us.

We Listen: The Gospel Matthew 2: 1-12

Read the gospel passage reflectively. After a time of silent reflection, the line from scripture below could be repeated and the short commentary read.

'When Herod heard this, he was frightened, and so was all Jerusalem.' Matthew 2:3

Commentary: What frightened Herod? Well, the news that an infant King had been born. Not Herod's rightful heir but a monarch challenging his dynasty. He was scared. The ruling class and the people were scared. Political confrontation and fear in an occupied country. The news threatened to throw the existing political balance out of kilter, to upset the status quo which allowed Herod's ruling class and the Roman conquerors to exploit and control the people of Israel. Sounds similar to us today at many levels. The fear of losing control of our power, our dominance, our self-interest to the unknown, to a possibly radical new vision, is why we turn our back on the infant King, born in Bethlehem, year after year, century after century. Courage to let go our control, to be open to the unexpected and new, and go forward by a different road is to travel with the Magi.

We Respond: 'He was frightened.....'

In silence, reflect on the questions below? You may wish to have a time of brief sharing.

- When have I felt fearful and hesitant about a new idea, a challenging truth?
- Can I venture along new paths, even at the risk of losing control?
- **Song:** We Three Kings (Traditional-Gather Australia), Song for Epiphany (Brian Moore-Gather Australia), Come to set Us Free (Bernadette Farrell-AOV1)

• We Go Forth:

Lead us, O God of the guiding star, to your homeland, the heart and word of Jesus Christ. Trusting in your promise of life, may we search for what is good and just, pure and tender and journey in love with all people. We ask this through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Leader: Let us go to tell of God's love to all people and nations. **All:** Thanks be to God.