



THEME OF THE WEEK: God Manifested in the Power of Jesus to Create

Following the narratives of Jesus' boyhood (Epiphany and Epiphany I), Epiphany II focuses on Jesus' first miracle (John 2) and His creative power. Here is fulfilled the historic Introit for Epiphany Day, "Behold, the Lord, the Ruler, hath come," fulfilling the prophecy of the prophet in Deuteronomy 18, the promises to the faithful in Psalms 14 and 16, and the promise of His presence to Zacchaeus (Luke 19). Christ is also manifest among us in holy living (Romans 12) and in union with His church (Ephesians 5). The Introit continues, "And the kingdom and the power and the glory are in His hand" – and so are you, who know Him now by faith.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: John 2:1-11 "And at Cana, wedding-guest, in Thy Godhead manifest" (TLH 134.2)

The Evangelist describes this event as "the first of [Jesus'] signs," i.e., the first in the sequence of miracles that serve as signposts to highlight the greater reality of His person and work and that eventually culminate in the greatest miracle of all—salvation in the hidden glory of the cross. The miracle of changing water into wine proclaims the good news that Christ is the only-begotten of the Father, the One by whom all things were created and in whom all things subsist. Apart from Him, we have but darkness and death. But in Christ alone, creation is restored, and joy is given to all who believe in Him. *Lord Jesus, as You once manifested Your glory by turning water into wine, continue to give us the finest of wines in the Blessed Sacrament. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 14 Manifest in the Generation of the Righteous

Early English translators of the Bible invented the word "atheist" to translate the saying in verse 1 of this Psalm, "There is no God." Before the age of Charles Darwin and the Enlightenment, an atheist was more of an idea than a reality. It was common knowledge that "wise man" (*homo sapien*) was also by nature "religious man" (*homo religios*), for even the most ridiculous of mythologies are full of demigods. But only Christianity has Jesus Christ, the fullness of God in human form (Colossians 2:9), who has come out of Zion to restore the fortunes of His people and let Israel be glad. *O Lord, apart from You we only turn aside to the idols of our choosing. Grant us to take refuge in You and in Your Son, in Whom alone is life and salvation. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: Romans 12:6-16a Manifest in Our Life Together in Christ

The imperatives in this reading from Romans are impossible for the sinful flesh to fulfill, perhaps especially the command, "Bless those who persecute you" (v. 14). See, O Sinner, how you have failed God and your neighbor and repent! But see how Christ and Christ alone has fulfilled every description of the Christian life: using His gifts for His neighbor's benefit, letting love be genuine, and blessing those who nailed Him to the cross. Having reconciled all things to Himself and made peace by His blood on the cross (Colossians 1:20), He continues to fulfill what He promised for our life together, "How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psalm 133:1). *Father, grant that we may be one, even as You and the Son are one. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 18:15-19 Manifest as the Prophet Greater than Moses

Moses and John the Baptist are the "bookends" of the prophets, with Moses being the first prophet and John being the last and greatest prophet. But the promise in Deuteronomy of a new and greater prophet was not fulfilled in Moses, in the prophets of old, or even in John the Baptist (John 1:21). Rather, the singular, preeminent, and supreme Prophet is Jesus Himself. So Moses and John preach repentance to make straight the way of the Lord in our hearts for these prophetic words, "I forgive you all yours sins." *O Lord, all that was promised in the prophets' sacred page and the poets' winged word has been fulfilled in Your Son. Grant that His gospel may be re-echoed among us now, 'Good will to all men!' Amen.* (Prayer adapted from TLH 132.2)

THU

SCRIPTURE: Luke 19:1-10 Manifest in Salvation for the Lost

No man can see God the Father, so Zacchaeus rightly desired to see the Son, who is the living icon of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15). See how he was small in stature, but even more so he was made low in spirit, calling upon the Lord as one who was poor and needy. Similarly, Zacchaeus was rich in the things of this world, but he renounced all earthly wealth in favor of being rich toward God, even as God took up residence in His house and brought with Him life and salvation. So let it be said of all who believe and are baptized, "Today salvation has come to this soul, for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." *In Thy favor, O my Savior! Thou wilt cheer me; Thy Word calls me to draw near Thee* (TLH 343.4). *Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 5:21-33 Manifest in the Mystery of Christ and His Church

Behold the truth behind marriage: Christ and the church. The husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the Head of the church. Wives are subject to their husbands, as the church is subject to Christ. The husband is willing to die for his bride, even as Christ loved His bride enough to suffer death in her stead and then to cleanse her through Holy Baptism. And as the husband rejoices over His bride in the oneness of their fleshly union, so may the bride of Christ ever rejoice in being a member of His own body, especially as she receives the Holy Sacrament. *Soul of Christ, hallow me; body of Christ, save me; blood of Christ, refresh me; water from the side of Christ, wash me; Passion of Christ, strengthen me; O good Jesus, hear me! Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 16 Manifest at the Right Hand of the Father

In this Psalm, David prays, Christ prays, the church prays. David prays that the Lord, Who is at his right hand, will never abandon him, a promise fulfilled in God's providence for David in life and in death. Christ prays that the Father would not abandon His soul to death and make known to Him the path of life, a promise fulfilled in Jesus' three-day rest in the tomb and in His glorious resurrection. And the church prays that Jesus, Who always intercedes for us at God's right hand, would never abandon His people, but bring them to "the fruition of [His] glorious Godhead" (Collect for Epiphany Day). *All glory, Jesus, be to Thee / For this Thy glad epiphany; Whom with the Father we adore / And Holy Ghost forevermore* (TLH 131.5). *Amen.*

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