

FAITH IN 5
Ordinary Time W.1

1. **When is the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord?** The Epiphany of the Lord is on January 6th but typically observed the closest Sunday to that date. **What happened on the feast of the Epiphany?** We read in Matthew 2:1-12 that the magi, or wise men from the East, studied and followed the star over Bethlehem. They first asked Herod where to find the newborn King. King Herod didn't know and had to consult the chief priests and scribes. When King Herod learned that Bethlehem was home to the King of the Jews, he informed the Magi and instructed them to return to him. **What happened when the Magi saw the baby Jesus?** These men, who were of a completely different faith, immediately recognized Jesus as Savior and King to all men. "They prostrated themselves and did him homage." **Do you know what famous gifts they gave to Jesus?** They gave him gold, identifying Jesus as King, Frankincense (an aromatic resin that was burnt before deities as prayers) to honor Jesus as the one, true God, and Myrrh (used for embalming and preserving bodies), foreshadowing his sacrifice and death for us, as well as his human nature. Epiphany means manifestation. On this solemnity Jesus is made known as King to not just the Jews, but the Gentiles as well.

2. **When does Christmas end and Ordinary Time begin?** Ordinary Time begins on the Monday after the first Sunday after January 6th (Epiphany Sunday). **Do you remember what color signifies Ordinary Time?** Green is the color of Ordinary Time. The green represents growth in our faith. We are striving to deepen our relationship with Jesus, as we learn and read about his early ministry.

3. **Who is Saint Hilary?** St. Hilary was born in the year 315 to a pagan family. He lived in Poitiers, France and was educated in the classics. Dissatisfied with pagan philosophy's answers to his questions about the meaning of life, St. Hilary began to study scriptures. He fully embraced the one, true God and was baptized! **Why is he a saint?** St. Hilary worked tirelessly to defend the faith. He was chosen to be bishop of Poitiers in 353 and spent much of his time fighting the Arianism Heresy. **What is the Arianism Heresy?** This was a belief that denied Christ's divinity, and it was spreading in many areas of the Church. Speaking out against heresy eventually led him to be exiled to Phygia. But St. Hilary was unstoppable. He spent his time in exile studying, writing and preaching. While he never relented speaking the truth, he was charitable with the Bishops that had been led astray. He truly wanted to show them their errors and help them. He even wrote hymns in effort to teach the doctrines of the faith! Pope Pius IX proclaimed him a doctor of the Church in 1851. **When is his feast day?** St. Hilary's feast day is January 13th. St. Hilary, pray that we may all have your zeal for truth and use our time wisely, like the way you used your time in exile!

4. **How can we prepare our hearts for Holy Mass?** There are many ways we can be proactive about entering into the right state of mind to receive the Holy Eucharist. You can go to confession Saturday afternoon. This purifies and cleans the altar of your heart! It is a perfect way to welcome Jesus into your body and soul. You can read the readings before mass, maybe even at dinner on Saturday night. Another idea is to pray a rosary, or a decade of the rosary on the way to church or before church. As you walk into mass, ask the Blessed Mary to help you focus and worship her Son. **How can we prepare our bodies for the Holy Mass?** The first way is by fasting at least one hour before receiving the Holy Eucharist. We unite the hunger in our bodies with the hunger in our soul to be fed by our Lord. Fasting is known to sharpen our minds and our focus, so it can really help us pay better attention! It also is a small physical mortification we can offer up to Jesus and that strengthens our spiritual muscles! Another way to prepare our bodies is with our posture. Kneeling down to pray before mass begins reminds our body something awesome and supernatural is going to take place. Dressing nicely reminds us that this is NOT an everyday event but we are going to be with the King of Kings who deserves all our effort and honor. Jesus is delighted to enter our hearts and our bodies, to give Himself to us. Mass is the ultimate gift of His presence, worthy of our preparation in body and soul!
5. **Catechism- Do you remember what Sanctifying grace is?** Sanctifying grace is grace that makes the soul holy and pleasing to God. We learned the names of the seven sacraments (signs of Christ's actions of love) last week. **Did you know there is also something called Sacramental grace?** Sacramental grace is a special help which God gives to attain the end for which He instituted each Sacrament. For example, in the sacrament of Baptism, we receive a share in God's life. The sacramental grace helps us keep that life of God in us, to believe in it and live the way God calls us to. Sacramental grace helps us avoid sin. (Baltimore Catechism, Lesson 23)

REVIEW QUESTION: Apologetics- How is Mary the Mother of God?! Isn't she just the mother of Jesus' human nature? Jesus did have both a human nature and a divine nature. They can't be separated! When Mary was carrying Jesus in her womb, her cousin Elizabeth identifies Mary "And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:43)

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