



St Marylebone
Parish Church

Epiphany 2 2019 11 am

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

There are moments in everyone's life when a penny drops; a time when one really understands something or someone for the very first time.

We all experience such moments – for good and for ill – whether it is the moment you realised that you had finally cracked making the perfect Vegan Beefless Wellington or twigged the warped logic behind solving the fiendish conundrum that is Rubik's cube or that it was time to say goodbye to someone with whom you might have thought you would spend the rest of your life.

The words which opened our worship last Sunday as we celebrated the Feast of the Epiphany reminded us that Epiphany is the season of discovery, the season of enlightenment, the season of the penny dropping and eyes, suddenly, opened.

Three wonders mark this holy day, as the Church is joined to her heavenly Bridegroom. This day a star leads the wise men to the manger. This day water is made wine at the wedding feast. This day Jesus is revealed as the Christ in the waters of Baptism. Alleluia! Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Epiphany leads us from Christmas Day to Candlemas, the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, on 2 February.

As the days lengthen and we know increasing hours of day light and experience those first hints of Spring, the Church invites us to see things anew, to look on things with fresh wide-open eyes; not just to see but to perceive.

It is at Epiphany, that we rejoice with the Magi, who, after years of wandering and searching, kneel before the child Jesus and perceive him to be Priest and King and Sacrifice.

It is at Epiphany, at a village wedding in Cana in Galilee, that the men and women who have left everything to follow the enigmatic carpenter-builder from Nazareth, perceive that he really is the Christ, the Messiah, the Word made flesh, incarnate in their midst.

And it is at Epiphany, that we stand with John the Baptist

and disciples in the waters of the river Jordan see the very heavens torn open to reveal that Jesus is the Lamb of God, the One who has come to take away the sin of the world.

John the Baptist had been baptizing in the wilderness for a long time. He had gathered around him a group of followers, disaffected by the corruption of Israel's compromised state religion and the ongoing Roman occupation. Men and women who had come to see things as John saw them.

Zealous, converted, washed clean from their sins, they were keen to share their enthusiasm with others.

John and his disciples proclaimed an uncompromising message of repentance and they invited the people of Jerusalem to leave the city and to rally to their righteous cause in the desert alongside the river Jordan.

But when Jesus enters the waters of the Jordan to be baptised, something extraordinary happens; the one who is converted, the one who has his eyes opened is not Jesus but John the Baptist himself and his disciples along with him!

Those who sought to open the eyes of others are the one who have their eyes opened; they are the ones for whom the penny suddenly drops; they are the ones who now see things in a new and clearer light; theirs are the hearts that are

captured and who now want others to see what they have perceived.

“Look”, shouts John to his disciples, “Here, right here, right now, is the Lamb of God! Here is the One for whom the world has been waiting; here in this very water, is the Messiah, the Christ, here is God’s long-promised chosen One!”

And those who had left everything to follow John, leave John to follow Jesus! They too have seen what John has seen.

So Andrew goes off and finds his older brother, Simon, and tells him that he too has to come and see. Simon meets Jesus and he is captivated by the Rabbi from Galilee.

With his eyes open, Simon, goes to look for Phillip and he brings him to Jesus and Phillip sees, is captivated by Jesus – and so the story of seeing and perceiving begins to echo through the centuries.

John the Baptist had his life sorted. He had a good ‘pitch’ down by the river Jordan. He had built up a successful ministry and a faithful group of followers. His name was known throughout the capital, but, when he sees Jesus, John knows that there before him was what really matters, who really matters; there before him in the water is the One that

makes sense not only of John's life but of the whole created order of things!

Like the Magi, like the disciples and the wedding guests in Cana, like John's disciples, may our eyes be opened through these days of Epiphany. May they be opened to the infinite possibilities of walking and talking with Jesus.

May we see what others have seen and having seen may we believe, and believing might we invite others to "come and see"!

Amen.