

The Feast of Epiphany - January 5, 2014

Readings:

R1: Is 60:1-6

R2: Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6

Gospel: Mt 2:1-12

Epiphany means manifestation. God manifests Himself to non-Jews. The feast tells us that God is not restricted to any particular religion and all those who seek him with a sincere heart are sure to find him. The feast of Epiphany brings home the following four messages strongly in our lives.

a. Search for Christ

Mullah Nasruddin was desperately looking for something under a street light. His neighbours came and asked him what he was looking for. He said that he was searching for the lost key. Neighbours too began searching for the same intending to help the Mullah. After some time, one of them asked Mullah where he had actually lost the key. Mullah replied that he had lost the key at home. "Why then are you searching for the key here?" asked his neighbourhood friends. Mullah replied that it was brighter there.

We need to search for the right things in the right place. The three wise men journeyed to find the newborn King. They searched for Him and found Him.

We cannot go to Bethlehem or Jerusalem in search of Jesus. We must search for Christ in our neighbours, in the Word of God and in the sacraments. Our earnest search will keep us united to the Lord and that will enable us to bear fruits in abundance in our lives.

- *Do I make efforts to look for Christ in my life?*
- *Do I take time out in prayer, in reading the Word of God and in receiving the sacraments?*

b. Worship Christ

The three wise men offered gold, myrrh and frankincense to the newborn King of the Jews. They bowed down before him and worshiped him. We too are called to worship, to offer our entire being to him. Our surrender should be total and whole-hearted. Only then our offering becomes complete. God did not accept the offering of Cain because his heart was not in it.

The story is about three wise men who stop on their way to Bethlehem at the hovel of a poor crippled boy named Amahl. When Amahl hears of their mysterious search for a child, he secretly follows behind. He watches in awe as the wise men present their gifts to the child. He is disturbed that he has no suitable gift to the child, until it occurs to him to offer the only thing he possesses, his crutches. As he presents his crutches, he is healed.

We too must offer wholeheartedly to God that which holds us back in coming closer to Him.

- *Do I come for mass as an obligation or as a need?*
- *What are the things that hold me back, in going closer to God? In what manner do I want to surrender them to God?*

c. Redirect Life

The wise men chose a different route to return to their homes (Mt 2:12). We must also choose a better way of life, abstaining from proud and impure thoughts, evil habits and selfish behavior. We are called to give new direction to our lives.

Touched by God, St. Paul challenged, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom 8:3) Touched by God, St. Augustine exclaimed, "Our hearts are made for you, Oh God, and they shall not rest until they rest in you." Touched by God, St. Francis of Assisi sang, "Make me a channel of your peace."

We must put away the worldly attitudes, values and goals which we might have thus far held dear and we will take on those of Christ, proclaiming by word and deed that Jesus is the Saviour of the World.

- *What changes do I look forward in my life?*
- *In what positive way do I want to respond to Christ's touch in my life this year?*

d. Become a Star for Others

An old man on his death bed was very sad. When enquired the reason for his sadness by his friend he said that he was very sad for he had led many astray. His friend wondered and asked what actually had happened. Then the man said that in his childhood, when he was 8 years old, he had turned the direction of a signboard at the crossroad playfully. Recalling the incident he feels sad that many may have taken a wrong path seeing the signpost.

On this feast of Epiphany, we are called to become stars, leading people in the right path. Just as the star led wise men to Jesus, we too are invited to lead others to Jesus. In this context the life of St. Andrew is very exemplary. Whenever his name is mentioned in the gospel we hear him bringing someone to Jesus. He introduces Simon Peter to Jesus, takes the Greek to Jesus, spots the boy who is having bread and fish and takes him to Jesus.

The Word of God challenges us to share the light of Christ we have received with others who still grope in darkness. We are called to remove the darkness of the evil around us by radiating Jesus' love by selfless service, unconditional forgiveness and compassionate care.

- *Does my life lead or mislead?*
- *Do my words and actions introduce Jesus to others?*

Let us become channels of God's grace for others. Let your light shine, so that seeing your good works people may give glory to God.

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