

The Epiphany 2021

A husband asked his wife, "Why would God give the wise men a star to guide them?" She replied, "Because God knows men are too proud to ask directions."

Dear Friends,

Today we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. Epiphany means manifestation or revelation. Originally the word Epiphany referred to the visit of a king to the people of his provinces. "Epiphany" refers to God's self-revelation as well as to the revelation of Jesus as His Son to all mankind. There are multiple revelations in the scripture and in the tradition.

The angels revealed Jesus to the shepherds, and the star revealed him to the Magi, who had already received hints of Him from the Jewish Scriptures. Later, God the Father revealed Jesus' identity to Israel at his Baptism in the Jordan. In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus revealed himself as the promised Messiah. Finally, Jesus revealed himself as a miracle worker at the wedding of Cana, thus revealing his divinity. These multiple revelations are all suggested by the Feast of the Epiphany.

The readings today expressed its extension of God's revelation to the nations. Isaiah prophesies that the glory of God shines as light to reach out to the nations. The prophet in this passage celebrates the Divine Light emanating from Jerusalem and foresees all the nations acknowledging that Light, enjoying that Light, and walking by that Light.

In the second reading, St. Paul reveals that the Gentiles also take part in God's salvation. God is available to all people. In the letter to Galatians (1:15-16) he said that he was called to proclaim Christ to the gentiles. The same thing we hear in the letter to the Ephesians 2: 12-22.

The Gospel gives us the picture of God's revelation of Jesus, different reaction of the groups involved in it, and helping us to be where we need to be. There were three groups involved here in the Gospel today.

- 1) King Herod: Herod did not like to hear Jesus' birth whom he thinks is a rival to his kingship. He was obsessed with power that he even put his own family members to death. The temple he built was to honor him rather than to honor God. It was a divine revelation for him and his palace. He developed hatred in himself because of the power. Hatred is a big thing in today's world. We can see that in everywhere. That's why Herod was not afraid to kill his own family members. Hatred is with us in every sphere of life. The infant king brought love which will destroy hatred.

Hatred dies only when it is turned upon itself. We are right in trying to contain it, but eventually it can only be defeated from within.

- 2) Jewish scholars: The Jewish scholars who interpreted the scripture and signs from the Old Testament knew about Jesus birth, but they ignored Jesus. They were worried about their own glory rather than finding out the truth. They did not take effort to look for Jesus.
- 3) The Magi: The Magi are looked as representative from the east who heard the news of Jesus' birth who came and adored him with gifts. They listened to God who guided them on the way through the star. They did not rely on human beings. They saw the child and adored him with the treasures, which represents the kingship, divine and human nature of Jesus Christ. They were open to new learning.

God reveals himself to all in so many ways. No one can own Jesus for themselves. He belongs to everyone. Whoever is involved in the plan of salvation, will see God's revelation.

Let us ask ourselves where do we belong?