

Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord

On this, the solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, it is a good time to take stock of our spiritual lives. The readings and gospel call us to examine how we approach our relationship with the Trinity in terms of how we worship Them at the Mass. In the gospel, we are given two different approaches to worshipping the Trinity; an authentic Trinity centered approach and a secular, cultural approach. For us today, does our approach to worship mirror secular society's approach as exemplified by King Herod or does our approach mirror a familial, covenant approach as exemplified by the Magi? Do we expect or want a Mass which just stays at the superficial level, one where we seek to be entertained with lively music, shallow emotional appeal and/or other secular symbols, actions and words? Or do we truly desire to participate in a transcendent, sacred, and beautiful spiritual experience of the Trinity's sacrificial love in the Mass by a full, conscious and active participation in it? Looking at our recent experience of this Christmas octave, how would it rate? Is this Christmas season a spiritual fulfilling, rewarding time or is it the usual dull, hum drum experience; and more importantly why did we experience this type of Christmas? This Advent season, did we follow secular culture's approach and celebrate Christmas activities, songs, and other events before Christmas; or did we spend it preparing our heart, mind and will to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior as the beginning of our receiving Their greatest gift, the gift of eternal life with the Trinity, through Their ultimate gift of love, Christ's Passion, Death and Resurrection which enables us to more fully appreciate and enjoy the Christmas Season when it properly occurs by listening to religious Christmas songs/hymns; by full, active and conscious participation in the Christmas Season Masses; and by possibly participating in the sacrament of Confession. If we've properly prepared ourselves for Christmas, we can continue to enjoy a truly Blessed, Joyful and Peaceful Christmas Season by asking the Trinity for Their graces so as to more fully, consciously and actively participate in the Mass as They desire us to participate in it.

During the short meditation time after this homily, we need to turn our heart, mind and will to the joyful, blessed task of offering the Trinity the praise and adoration that is due Them just as the Magi gave Christ their homage that first Christmas.

During the Eucharistic Prayer, when we hear:

“Be pleased to look upon these offerings
with a serene and kindly countenance,
and to accept them,
as once you were pleased to accept
the gifts of your servant Abel the just,”

Will we offer up our heart, mind, and will in union with Christ's sacrifice of Himself, so as to offer up an acceptable sacrifice just as Abel did, an offering of our best efforts at full, conscious and active participation in the Mass and by offering up our best efforts at loving the Trinity as They love us?

While we are waiting to receive our Lord & Savior at communion, will we spend a moment or two, silently thanking the Trinity for Their greatest gift, our redemption which enables us to be adopted daughters and sons of the Father. Will we also ask Them for the graces we need to grow in our ability to more fully, consciously and actively participate in the Mass as the Trinity desire us to?

During the quiet meditation time given us right after communion, we need to spend that time quietly thanking the Trinity for all the blessings They have given us, especially Their sacrificial love which we are experiencing at this and every mass. We also need to ask Them for the graces we need to more fully, consciously and actively participate in this and every mass. Or will our hearts, minds and will be spending that time desiring and thinking of secular activities and things?

After the Mass, and during the week, will we try to find some time to pray to the Trinity asking for the graces we need to strengthen the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in order to grow in our ability to become more intimate loving adopted daughters and sons of the Father; to become more intimate loving adopted brothers and sisters of Christ.

Will we also make use of the sacrament of Confession, so as to receive the graces we need, to further strengthen the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in order to grow in our ability to continue to find and avoid those influences, situations, and actions, which lead us to sin, so as to grow in our ability to become more intimate loving adopted daughters and sons of the Father; to become more intimate loving adopted brothers and sisters of Christ.

Before we continue on with the Mass, let us ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit now, and especially when we consume our Lord in the Eucharist; so we can be open to the Trinity's graces; in order to reject secular culture's values, ideas, and approach to life; so as to become more intimate, loving, adopted family members, of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.