

The Journey

01.06.2019 – Feast of Epiphany – Homily

Is 60 1-6 Eph 3:2-3, 5-6 Mt 2:1-12

The Magi as narrated in the Gospel reading, journey to find the newborn babe Jesus. Leaving the security of their homeland, they ventured forth into a strange country in order to find the Savior. Like all men, these astrologers too were in constant search after human fulfillment, but they believed that only in the Savior Jesus they could finally find what they had been searching for all their lives.

We too are making our individual journeys, searching after something, which alone will give meaning to our existence; we are searching for something permanent and eternal. Happily, for us, by the gift of faith in Christ, which we already possess, we are in no doubt that, we can find our perfect fulfillment only in Jesus.

The word ‘Epiphany’ means a manifestation, a laying open. The Lord lays himself open to everyone. As Jesus says, ‘I have spoken openly to the world... I have said nothing in secret’. To use a contemporary term, there is a wonderful transparency about the Lord. Epiphany is the feast of the Lord’s transparency. He is transparent and the Lord reveals himself to us. His ways are many.

1. It could be through an inward illumination that draws us closer to God. It could be through a sense of wonder, which is fundamentally religious.
2. It could be through a clearer vision of what human life is all about.
3. It could be through an intimate experience of love for God and for neighbors
4. It could be through a spiritual insight, which is called enlightenment.

Yes, we journey towards the Lord who reveals through different ways. But we need a guide for our spiritual journey as the Magi needed a star to guide to Jesus. Our guiding star is obviously the divine teaching of Christ.

However, our journey towards a closer encounter with Christ will not all the time be smooth and easy; neither was it so for the Magi. It was for them like a night – time journey between two harbors. It will be the same for us. The figure of Herod in the gospel reading can symbolize the forces that work to prevent us finding the one for whom we long. We can encounter many obstacles on our journey towards the Lord of light and truth.

As we start our Journey on some road following our individual ‘vocation’ in life, trying to follow the teachings of Jesus as our guiding star, we may initially be attracted by a bright ideal or vision or hope. However, when we are on our way, we must be ready to meet clouds that would blot out the light of Faith and make us stumble and the darkness of faith may even discourage us from continuing our journey towards Christ. Perhaps we are distracted by the myriads of little stars such as money and power, comfort and security, offered by the world as the Milky Way to happiness. Yet, the gospel reading also suggests that the obstacles will not ultimately prevail if we are faithful to our search for the true light. Also, the story of the journey of the magi teaches us that the drawing power of the Lord’s loving presence is stronger than all the obstacles we might encounter. In the words of Saint Paul. ‘God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength’.

As the wise men expressed their worship by offering the child their precious gifts, we express our own worship of the Lord in the Eucharist by offering him gifts, and our most precious gift is the gift of our lives. In the Eucharist we give ourselves to the Lord, in response to his giving of himself to us as bread of life, saying ‘Here I am’ in response to his ‘Take and eat’.

1. We would daily offer Christ our gift of “gold” **to his royalty**, namely our loyalty and fidelity to him
2. We could daily offer Christ our gift of “frankincense” **to his divinity**, namely our prayer and worship
3. We could daily offer Christ our gift of “myrrh” **to his humanity**, namely our human sufferings and sorrows

The gospel reading tells us that, after worshipping the child, the wise men returned home by a different way. Our own worship of the Lord in the Eucharist will often prompt us to take a different path too. We come to the Eucharist open to being changed by our meeting with the Lord. We are sent forth from the Eucharist to follow the way of the Lord more closely. We pray on this feast of the Epiphany that we would be as open to the Lord’s path as the wise men were.

Lastly, Epiphany offers us both a welcome and a challenge. It welcomes us to renew our Faith and continue our search for fullness of Christ. It also challenges us to continue the manifestation of Christ to the world. It challenges us to share the light of Christ we have received with others who still grope their way from dark behind to dark before, because we believe that in Christ night is day. It challenges us to offer Christ to those who are still searching for meaning in their lives. It challenges us to become channels of God’s grace, because grace that cannot be seen is no grace at all.

Should we not accept this Epiphany Challenge? We should because we must be saved together or we will not be saved at all.

Let us pray:

Lord be my guiding star in my spiritual journey. In my struggles on my journey be my strength. Daily may I offer myself as a gift and give me

grace to become guiding star to others. Taking all the challenges in my life let me be faithful to your call. Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for bringing salvation to all the nations. May the gospel of salvation be proclaimed to every nation today and to every person on the face of the earth. Help me to be a good witness of the joy of the gospel to all I meet.

Jesus I trust in you