

January 03, 2021
The Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord
Is 60:1-6
Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13
Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6
Mt 2:1-12

THE STAR AND THE WISE MEN!

The three wise men arrived to visit the child lying in the manger. One of the wise men was exceptionally tall and bumped his head on the low doorway as he entered the stable. **"Jesus Christ!"** he exclaimed. Joseph said, **"Write that down, Mary; that's a nice name. It is better than Edison!"**

Kidding aside, it was not one of the wise men who named the baby, Jesus. In the Gospel of Matthew (1:25), after the angel of the Lord appeared on his dream, Joseph named Mary's baby, Jesus.

We are celebrating today the **Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord Jesus**. This feast celebrates the manifestation/showing/revelation of the Lord Jesus to all the nations as signified by the presence of the magi or wise men from the East. The Lord Jesus' epiphany conveys a message that his Lordship or Kingship is for all and not for the selected few. His epiphany communicates his love and mission for humanity – salvation, not condemnation, for all!

I would like to point out two things to you today: **the star** and **the wise men**. We know that star shines in the darkness of the night. It is a symbol of divine guidance or enlightenment. It also signifies the knowledge of good and truth. From a biblical point of view, a star means **a sign of God to follow his path**. And this is what the wise men did – they followed the guidance of the star they saw. Thus, they came face to face with the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ.

The star that was shining in the dark during the nativity was no ordinary star. This 'star,' when it stopped at the place where the Child Jesus was born, conveyed a higher truth - the Child Jesus was extraordinarily special. **Why?** It is simply because the Child Jesus is the LIGHT himself. Jesus will confirm this truth in **John 8:12** when he says: **"I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."**

Our Lord Jesus is our STAR that guides our way. He shines all the time particularly in our experience of darkness. As our STAR, he invites us to follow his path. He encourages us to share his light to others. We, who believe in his light, are called to bring his light to those who are experiencing darkness in their lives.

What about the wise men? The wise men were outsiders seeking/searching for God. They were looking for the truth. Following the guidance of the star, they encountered, not only the TRUTH, but the WAY and the LIFE as well. These wise men were brave/courageous/fearless in leaving everything behind just to find the newborn King. Through God's grace, they found him

and a new beginning happened in their lives. They embraced the new way that the newborn King traced out for them.

The attitudes of the wise men in relation to the newborn King invite us to examine our own attitudes in life. And so we ask ourselves: **Are we really looking for God in the ups and downs of our lives? Do we truly desire/yearn to find him? What are we willing to leave behind to have a real encounter with him?**

The wise men offered the best gift they can offer to the newborn King. **What about us? What gifts are we eager to offer him this New Year? Are we going to be more generous in giving our time, talent and treasure for the advancement of the mission entrusted to us, his Church? Will we be more open in embracing the four pillars of stewardship of hospitality, prayer, formation and service this year?**

As we begin this New Year, let us pray in this celebration that we may have the gift of obedience to follow the path of Christ Jesus, our STAR; the gift of humility to respond to his call to conversion; the gift of courage to share his light to others; and the holy yearning to be stewards of the Gospel.

A Blessed New Year to you and your whole family!