

**THE SOLEMNITY OF EPIPHANY**  
**BE THE STAR POINTING TO JESUS**

**January 8, 2023**

We are happy that Christ is born, giving us the assurance that there is hope for our salvation. But today's feast should bring us more joy, because those of us who are not Jews have received the news that the Savior of the world is born for both Jews and Gentiles. The star appeared to the Gentiles indicating that there was good news for them too. Epiphany, therefore, is the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. It is also to commemorate the baptism of the Lord in the Jordan, and the changing of water into wine in Cana.

Through the prophet Isaiah God told the Israelites to rejoice because her light had come, and the glory of the Lord had appeared over her even though darkness was covering the earth. He prophesied that nations would walk by her light. People from the east would bring gold and frankincense and the wealth of nations would be brought to her. A sign that the Gentiles would be one with the Jews.

St. Paul told the Ephesians that it was revealed to him and the apostles and prophets by the Spirit that the Gentiles are coheirs, and members of the body of Christ through the gospel. This was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah.

Today, we hear that the three Wise Men or the magi from the east saw the star of the newborn king of the Jews and they had come to do Him homage. The star became a 'GPS' or a sign post guiding and directing them to reach where the Savior had been born. They did not come with empty hands; they brought with them frankincense, gold and myrrh. These are precious gifts which were significant in the life of the Lord. Gold symbolizes kingship, frankincense – priesthood, and myrrh – incorruptibility. These items speak about the nature of the newborn child and what He would be.

Since we are now coheirs and members of the body of Christ, what are we to do? In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus told His disciples "You are salt of the earth", and "You are light for the world" (Mt.5:13&14). The light of the Lord has shone on me too, so I should let that light shine. How bright is my light? Is my light colored so it does not give a true picture of things around me? If the star was not bright, the Wise Men wouldn't have seen the way to Christ.

Is my life pointing to Jesus or to myself? John the Baptist, like the star, pointed to Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). John knew Jesus so he was able to show Him to the people. John's life was so exemplary that the people thought he was the Messiah. Do I know Jesus? Am I living a life that is worthy of emulation? Or am I living a double life?

Many Christians today are behaving like Herod; we deceive people and ourselves by the way we go about things. Instead of people walking by our light we are making them stumble every day. There is no difference between a Christian and someone who is not a Christian. We are influenced by secular ideas more than what Jesus teaches us. We want to modify the word of God to suit our way of life. Like Herod, we are driven by greed, selfishness and power-drunkenness to live a deceitful life. We follow the father of lies, the devil, and leave the Truth, Jesus, behind.

The magi brought gold, frankincense and myrrh; what am I giving to the newborn child? Jesus does not need these items. He wants my heart. St. Paul tells us what to offer: "I urge you, by the mercy of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect" (Rom. 12:1-2).