

## Homily: The Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord ( January 4<sup>th</sup>)

*"We Have Seen His Star and Have Come to Worship Him"*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today the Church celebrates the **Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord**. The word *Epiphany* comes from the Greek *epiphaneia*, meaning **appearance, manifestation, or revelation**. On this feast, we proclaim a profound truth of our faith: **God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ not only to Israel, but to all nations, to the whole world**. The Epiphany is the feast of divine light breaking into human darkness.

In the Gospel, we encounter two very different responses to this manifestation of God. On one side stands **Herod**, a king surrounded by power, information, and religious experts—yet he remains in darkness. Though he hears the Scriptures and learns where the Messiah is to be born, his heart is closed. Fear, pride, and the desire to protect his own power blind him. Herod reminds us that it is possible to know much about God and yet fail to truly recognize Him.

On the other side are the **Magi**, seekers from the East—outsiders, Gentiles, guided not by Scripture alone but by a star. They represent the nations of the world, all those who search for truth with sincere hearts. God reveals Himself not first to the powerful or the self-sufficient, but to the humble and the searching.

This pattern of revelation is consistent in the Christmas mystery. **First, God manifested His Son to the shepherds**—poor, marginalized, and considered insignificant by society. They were the first to hear the angel's message and the first to see the newborn Savior. Then, at the Epiphany, God manifests Christ to the **Magi**, showing that salvation is not limited to one people or one culture. Jesus is the light for all nations.

The journey of the Magi is rich in meaning. They come **from the East**, symbolizing the world beyond Israel, the nations still waiting in darkness. Their journey teaches us that faith is a pilgrimage—a movement toward God. They follow the light they are given, even when it is incomplete. And when they finally encounter the Child, they do not ask questions or demand signs; "*they prostrated themselves and did Him homage*" (Matthew 2:11).

They bring **three gifts**, each deeply symbolic:

- **Gold**, a gift for a king, proclaims Jesus as **King of Kings**.
- **Frankincense**, used in worship, acknowledges Him as **God**, worthy of adoration.
- **Myrrh**, a burial spice, foreshadows His **suffering and death**, reminding us that this Child is born to save us through the cross.

Thus, in a single moment, the whole mystery of Christ is revealed: **King, God, and Savior**.

The Epiphany challenges us to ask: *Where do we stand?* Are we like Herod—protective of our own comfort and control, threatened by God's presence? Or are we like the Magi—willing to leave behind certainty, to journey, to kneel, and to offer our gifts?

This feast also teaches us that **God's light is meant to be shared**. The star did not lead the Magi to keep the good news for themselves; it led them to worship and then to return home "by another way." Encountering Christ always changes our direction.

**Lessons from the Feast of the Epiphany:**

- God reveals Himself to the humble and the sincere seeker.
- Christ is the Savior of all people, without exception.
- Faith requires journey, risk, and trust in God's light.
- True worship leads to transformation and mission.

Dear brothers and sisters, the Epiphany reminds us that **Christ continues to manifest Himself today**—in the Word, in the Eucharist, in the poor, and in our daily lives. The question is not whether God reveals Himself, but whether we are willing to see.

**Question for Meditation:**

*What "star" is God placing in my life to lead me closer to Christ—and like the Magi, am I willing to follow it, kneel in worship, and offer Him the best of who I am?*

May the light of Christ shine in our hearts and guide us always. Amen.