

JANUARY 2, 2022
Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord
Matthew 2: 1-12

“JESUS, THE STAR AND LIGHT OF MY LIFE.”

“Mother Teresa once visited a poor man in Melbourne, Australia. He was living in a basement room, which was in a terrible state of neglect. There was no light in the room. He did not seem to have a friend in the world. She started to clean and tidy the room. At first, he protested, ‘Leave it alone. It is alright as it is.’ But she went ahead anyway. As she cleaned, she chatted with him. Under a pile of rubbish, she found an oil lamp covered with dust. She cleaned it and discovered that it was beautiful. And she said to him, ‘You have got a beautiful lamp here. How come you never lighted it?’ ‘Why should I light it? No one ever comes to see me.’ ‘Will you promise to light it if one of my sisters comes to see you?’ ‘Yes,’ he replied. ‘If I hear a human voice, I will light the lamp.’ Two of Mother Teresa’s sisters began to visit him regularly. Things gradually improved for him. Every time the sisters came to visit him, he had the lamp lighted. Then one day he said to them: ‘Sisters, I will be able to manage myself from now on. Do me a favour. Tell the first sister who came to see me that the light she lit in my life is still burning.’ The light that God lit to announce the coming of His son is still burning. The Magi followed the path of the great light and reached the cradle of Jesus. For the last twenty centuries many have followed the footprints of the Magi. Today, Jesus stands before us declaring, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk-in darkness but will have the light of life.’”¹

Today, the second day and the first Sunday of the New Year 2022, we are celebrating the Epiphany of the Lord. Epiphany means the manifestation of Jesus first to the three Magi from the East and a manifestation of the Messiah to the whole world.

¹ stories4homilies.blogspot.com

Jesus revealed Himself to the Magi who travelled from a foreign and non-Jewish nations signifies that the Messiah came for all people in the world and are called to give homage, honor, adore and worship the Lord. They were called wise men who liked and studied the stars and saw a distinctive, new, and unique star over the city of Bethlehem. They were aware that a Messiah was coming for the Jews, a Jewish belief which intrigued them and search for its truth.

My dear sisters and brothers, the first lesson of this solemnity is that God uses familiar things for us to understand Him. In this case, God used a star to call the three Magi to manifest and make Him known to all people. We also need to look for that Star, the Messiah, Jesus Christ in our brothers and sisters, daily experiences, and words of others. "The celebration of Epiphany is like a second Christmas. It is, in fact, the Christmas of the Eastern Churches. It proclaims that the child Jesus belongs to and is given to the whole world as its Savior. With the magi, the world brings to Him its variety of gifts: its culture, its many facets, its different identities. And we here, like people from other nations, bring Him the gift of ourselves: our faith, our fidelity, our love, as we meet Him in prayer and in people, especially in the poorest."²

The second lesson of this solemnity is that the Magi prostrated themselves before the Child Jesus. They placed their lives before the Child in complete homage, surrender and adoration. This is a perfect example for all of us. If these wise men, all astrologers from a non-Jewish and distant land could come, worship, and adore the Baby Jesus with a deep and sincere manner, we too must do the same approach. Perhaps we could visit the tabernacle today or prostrate in front of the crucifix at home prayerfully like the Magi or sincerely pray from the heart adoring Him with all humility and trust. Let us have a complete surrender to Him with our lives.

² ibid

Third, the wise men brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh. These gifts, presented to Jesus, the Lord and King who would die to save all of us: the gold fit for a King, frankincense a burnt offering given only to God, and myrrh used for the One who would die for the sake of others. The adoration they gave is established in the truth of who this Baby Jesus is. We too must honor Him, our Lord and Savior in this threefold way, the proper way to adore Christ.

My brothers and sisters may the Light shine upon us, guide us and lead us to Him, the Star of our lives. Like the three wise men, let us prostrate, adore, and give all our selves to Jesus who die for our sake. Let us also bring our gifts to Him especially our true selves, prepared through the Sacrament of Reconciliation and receive Him sincerely in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, in the communion. And be the light for others through our good words and deeds everyday of our lives. May all be lights for others as Jesus, the Star and Light of our lives.

Let this be our prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, I love you, I adore you and I surrender all my life before you as my Divine King and Savior. This is the day you manifested and made bright with your light. May you guide me as my life is only yours and your light shine everywhere to all nations and all people of colors, cultures, races, and languages praise and respect you. May I always worship you and manifest it through my good words and deeds given to my brothers and sisters everyday. Amen."