

**Homily on the feast of Epiphany**  
**Is 60:1-6; Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6; Mt 2:1-12**  
**“A new year, A new path”**

Dearly beloved, as we celebrate the feast of the Epiphany, we gather in thanksgiving to God who has made us, though we are unworthy, to be part of the mystery of the incarnation. Even though the promise of the incarnation was made known to the Jewish people, the fulfilment of this great promise has been revealed to other nations as well. The Greek word for Epiphany-*epiphanos*, means *appearance* or *manifestation* or showing forth, and it is used to describe Jesus' first appearance to the Gentiles. Originally, the word Epiphany referred to the visit of a king to the people of his provinces. "Epiphany" refers to God's self-revelation as well as to the revelation of Jesus as His Son to all mankind. The celebration of Epiphany originates from the East and happens to be an older celebration of God's revelation of Christ than Christmas. Christmas.

The first reading from the prophet Isaiah, affirms, not only that THE LIGHT has come into the world, but it also affirms the “gathering of the nations”:

*“Your light has come,  
the glory of the Lord shines upon you...  
... Raise your eyes and look about;  
they all gather and come to you:  
your sons come from afar,  
and your daughters in the arms of their nurses”*

Beloved, throughout the Old Testament, the prophets have foretold the plan of God to bring together the nations of the earth. In fact, that was the mission of the Jewish nation; that through them all may come to know the true God, but it was a mission they failed to accomplish. In the second reading St. Paul affirms this mystery of God's plan of salvation in and through Christ; God's “secret plan” – that the Gentiles also have a part with the Jews in Divine blessings. Paul explains that this plan includes both Jews and Gentiles.

In the gospel we see what Fr. Anthony Kadavil describes as, “*the triple reactions.*” Fr. Kadavil reflected on this reading and commented this passage is a symbol of our “*pilgrimage through life towards a life in Christ.*” Various people react differently to the proclamation of the gospel; *hatred, indifference and adorations.*

**Hatred:** Like Herod, some react to the whole story of Jesus with much hatred. The news of the gospel is unsettling to them and it makes them feel uneasy. You are familiar with how some communities have reacted to the cross or even the crib at public spaces. Today, many

oppose Christ and his Church because of their selfish and evil motives. Children still have Herod's figures to fear, as millions of innocent, unborn children are aborted annually.

**Indifference:** The scribes, the Pharisees and the Jewish priests knew that there were nearly 500 prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures concerning the promised Messiah. They were able to tell Herod the exact time and place of Jesus' birth. However, they remained indifferent to His presence in their world; as compared the magi, the shepherds and other groups who went in search of the infant Jesus. These "Pharisaic people" are those who have faith as a means to their selfish ends. That is, only as far as it serves their ego – power, prestige, recognition etc.

**Adoration:** Like the shepherds and the Magi, this group of people come with all they have. Love, tears of joy, probably woolen cloths to keep him warm and also gold, frankincense and myrrh. Thanks be to God, many of us gathered today, could be considered part of this particular group. Thank you for your daily love and devotion to this King. Thank you for your search of Christ, which always brings you to this place to worship. Thank you for your gifts and resources to keep the message of the good-news alive in the world.

Beloved, if you do not see yourselves in this group yet and you're to work on this relationship, there is every opportunity to help you feel that you are indeed a part of it. Let your love and devotion at Mass be sincere, yet let it also be humble and loving. Allow the life from the celebration of the Eucharist increase your love and friendship with not only God Himself, but also and those around you who continue to seek Christ as well. Seek to be reconciled through confession and forgiveness for yourself and those who have wronged you. Above all, as we begin a new year, learn from the magi, do not go back on the road to "Herod." Choose a new course of life for yourself. And trust in God, that His narrow path will lead you safely home to be with HIM.

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