

Homily: Epiphany of the Lord: 2022: Is 60: 1-6; Ps. 72; Eph 3: 2-3a, 5-6; Mt.2:1-12

“The Revelation of Jesus to the Magi – He is the Savior for the whole world”

1. **We are celebrating as a Church today the Revelation of Jesus to the Gentiles, the fulfillment of all the promises of the Old Testament.** The Gospel sees the Magi (wise men or Kings), who come from the East (Persia, China?) led by the special star of Bethlehem, as representatives of all the pagan religions of the world, coming to worship the Messiah, Jesus, as the beginning of the fulfillment of the promise made in Isaiah, in the 1st reading, that all nations will come to worship the Christ, who will be the King of all the nations. There may have been three (3 gifts) or more. But the beautiful message from this event is: **Jesus is the Savior of the world and all are called to worship Him.** This is why the Catholic Church tries to bring the message of His love and truth to all the nations: *Jesus came into the world to save all peoples.* Many today think we should just leave the Jewish people, the Muslims, the Hindus, the Buddhists, and other non-Christians alone in their belief. But if we did that, we would not be exercising fraternal spiritual charity, for as our late Holy Father Pope St. John Paul II put it, *“all men and women have the right to hear the fullness of the Truth that God has revealed for our salvation, which is contained in the person of Jesus and in the gift of the Catholic Faith.”* We respect everyone and their belief in the depths of their conscience, but we also want to share the gift of our Catholic faith with them and hope and pray the Holy Spirit brings them to freely accept it in love. That is the ultimate goal of all Catholic missionary endeavors. This is also why we are called to witness and share our Catholic Faith with our non-Catholic Christian brothers and sisters who have some understanding of the Revelation of Jesus, but only partially since the fullness of God’s Revelation to the human race subsists in the Catholic Church which Jesus Himself founded, in the Bible, in Sacred Tradition, in the Mass and the Sacraments. *This is the TRUTH that we must rejoice in and share with others, in the confidence of the Holy Spirit, with humility of heart.*

2. **The Magi sought out the child Jesus.** Why did they sacrifice so much to seek the child? Obviously they had a desire to know the full Truth of human existence and the meaning of the universe. They are often pictured as **studying the star** that led to where the child Jesus and Mary and St. Joseph were residing. **Are we people of the truth, like them?** Do we seek out the will of God as it is manifested through the authentic teaching of the Catholic Church, especially when we are struggling with some question of faith or morality? It is so much easier just to follow our own will, and say “God understands; I am just a weak human being.” We must not cop-out, rationalize, or sell ourselves short. God calls us to a life of holiness - not compromise and rationalization of weakness; after all, God tells us through St. Paul, *“that His strength is made perfect in weakness.”* His grace can transform us no matter what sin or weakness we are struggling with, e.g., greed, hatred, a life of selfishness, of lust, addictions of various sorts, etc. **Don’t ever forget that truth or get discouraged - since Jesus came to help and save us from our sins!** The Magi have a lot to teach us in that regard. They were willing to sacrifice a lot: a long, arduous, dangerous journey which took months or years, the probable ridicule of family and friends (why are you chasing some star?), maybe the loss of their livelihood, the wrath of Herod, etc. all because they were seeking the ultimate Truth- in God! **Are we willing to do the same:** to carry out our sacred mission given to us by the Lord in our Baptism to evangelize or share our Catholic faith with others?
3. **Finally may we give a beautiful gift to Jesus today,** as the Magi did when they brought gold (*to honor His divinity*), frankincense (*to honor His priesthood*) and myrrh (*in preparation for death*). **What gift are we called to give to Jesus?** *How about our life: our heart, our mind, our will, our whole being.* **This is what the Lord wants!** To the extent we allow His Love, Truth & Cross to permeate our life here on earth - then we will be transformed into His image, and will have that **communion** and a **spiritual fire** in our hearts to want to bring this gift of His life to others: *in joy, in suffering, in prayer, in sacrifice & penance, in good works, in everything.* May we **be a people of the Truth** like the Magi. God bless you.