

Homily for the Epiphany

Readings: Isaiah 60: 1-6; Ephesians 3: 2-3, 5-6; Matthew 2: 1-12



Fr Jean-Marie says:

Theme: People from all nations shall come to adore the Lord

Today we are celebrating the great feast of the Epiphany. Epiphany means manifestation. The celebration of Epiphany is like a second Christmas. Sometimes it is referred to as the little 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 Saviour. In the Western Church the stress of Christmas was and is, on the birth of Christ as little human child. In the Eastern Church the stress is more on Jesus coming as the Lord and Saviour of all.

This is the reality that the liturgy stresses today: Jesus came to save and bring life to all. No one is excluded; no one is a stranger to him. In the first reading Isaiah sees in a vision an immense number of peoples flocking from everywhere to God's light. The nations and kings come to the light of the Lord. People from Sheba will come to praise the Lord bringing him gifts of gold and incense.

In the second reading from the letter to the Ephesians, Saint Paul tells us that the mystery of God has now been revealed to people of all generations as well as to the pagans. Thus all nations are called in Christ. Jesus came to unite all: without any discrimination, all peoples are called to join God's people.

In the gospel, Matthew shows us Jesus as the light and meaning of our lives and as the star of salvation of all peoples. People from afar, the wise men from the east came to seek the Saviour. Following his star they found him and recognized him as the king who is to shepherd Israel and did him homage as they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh; to fulfil the prophecy of Isaiah in the first reading.

Like people from other nations, we come to praise Jesus. Here we bring him the gift of ourselves: our faith, our fidelity, our love, as we meet him in prayer and in other people. We pray that all people may come to know Jesus, alive here among us.