

### *Epiphany by Br Adams*

One of Aesop's fables goes like this. A child was sitting by a wall when suddenly a toad emerged from its hole. The child quickly spread out her silk scarf. The sort of which toad like to walk on. As soon as the toad saw the scarf, it went back into the hole and returned carrying a gold crown which it laid on the scarf, and went back into the hole again. The girl immediately, picked up the gold crown and put it into her pocket.

Before long, the toad came out again, but when it did not see the crown on the scarf, it crept to the wall and from sorrow beat its little head against the wall until it finally collapsed and died. Had the girl let the crown lie on the scarf, the toad would have surely brought out more treasures from the cave or from its hole.

The purpose of this little story is to show that everybody has a treasure to share. The question is: how to get them to share that treasure? A lot of patience is called for. The secret lies in getting them to share it voluntarily. There is no point in forcing people to make sacrifices. If you take things from people, they are impoverished; but if you can get them to give them up, they are enriched. **People are essentially good, but this goodness has to be awakened and called forth, if they are to enter the kingdom of love.** We are all God's creatures, capable of love. Nobody is born ill. The circumstances of life, sometimes build our character. That is why we must not judge and why we must always give people a chance to repent and why love must always be that energy which drives us in helping the neighbour.

Here, Christmas comes to our aid. If God's Son had come in wealth, He would have made us aware of our own poverty. Thus, he would have evoked a feeling of envy in us, and done serious damages to our hearts. But he came in weakness, thereby making us aware of our own riches. His poverty evokes in us a feeling of compassion, thereby bringing our hearts to life. To look at the poverty of the infant king of the universe, causes us to open our hearts.

It was the poverty of Jesus that caused the Magi to open their treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and lay them before him. And instead of being impoverished, the Magi were enriched. It is through giving that we are enriched, because through giving, we discover our own riches.

The lovely feast of Epiphany challenges us to open our hearts. To open one's heart is to begin to live. Jesus no longer needs our gifts. But other people may. He wants us to share ourselves with one another. And we too will find ourselves enriched, if as a result of knowing Jesus, we are able to open the treasures of our hearts and share them with others.

Amen.

6 January 22.