

The Feast of the Epiphany

January 3, 2010

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Good morning. Today we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. The Epiphany is one of many, even in the Morning Prayer that the priest will say every day, The Antiphon for the Gospel Cantic, incorporates not only the Three Kings, but it incorporates the Baptism of the Lord and it incorporates the changing of the water into wine each of these things is an epiphany – God revealing Himself to us. And of course the Kings, or the Magi, or the Wise Men, when they were confronted with this epiphany, they came to God offering Him gifts. Sometimes you see throughout the Christmas season and other times throughout the year, “Wise Men Still Seek Him.” And we go, “That’s nice.” But it isn’t only the “Wise Men Who Seek Him,” Herod sought Him too so that he could kill Him. Herod sought Him to make sure that Jesus would not take his kingship. Herod sought Him and wanted Him so he could see what He was going to do or stop being done for him. Herod, when he saw Jesus, was concerned about Herod. The Wise Men, when they saw Jesus, were concerned about Jesus. Not once in the Gospel today do you hear that they ask Jesus for anything. They didn’t ask Him for anything. All that they did was prostrated themselves, fall down on their faces, gave Him homage or worship, and then they gave Him gifts.

You know, often in our own lives, we just don’t just come to church of course to get from God. In fact that should not be the purpose at all. The word Eucharist, as we have talked about a thousand times throughout the years means thanksgiving. That the primary reason for Mass is to offer back to God thanksgiving, our lives, our gifts. If you go to Mass and it was the greatest Mass of your life, you are all excited; you felt all giddy inside. You are like “Oh that was so uplifting. I feel so good.” Well, again, that was God’s gift to you. If you go to Mass and Fr. Larry’s homily stinks and it seems so long and the music didn’t go well that day and it was on and on and on. And Fr. Larry yelled and screamed for whatever reason. And you got out of there and you go, “UGH!” That was your gift to God. You didn’t get anything out of it. And see that is the point.

Someone like Mother Theresa, for fifty years she got nothing when she worshipped God. She felt nothing for 50 years. And she didn’t stop and say, “Well, I’m done with this stuff! Who am I to give all this stuff away. Why should I do all this? I don’t get nothing when I go to God.” For fifty years she kept giving to God. she kept giving the gift of her life, the gift of her worship, the gift of her praise though she received nothing from Him internally. And so that is something for us. Are we people that come to seek Him for what He will do for us or are we here to offer Him homage, praise, thanksgiving? The gifts of ourselves; the gifts of our talents; the gifts of the things we have; the things we received? Is this about giving back to God? What is it that you give Him today? What is it? Do you give Him your life? Do you give Him your praise? Do you give Him your worship? Or are you here today and say, “Okay God I need this and take care of this. Oh, and this one needs my prayers. We need to do those things too, of course. You know Jesus, Himself said, “Ask and you shall receive.” So of course we must ask, of course. That isn’t the point. But is that the only thing we do? When we come into His presence is it all about me or is it all about Thee? Is it all about Jesus? Am I like the Wise Men who seek Him to offer my life, my homage, my talents, my gifts? What do I bring Jesus today? Not just today but every day.

So of course let us ask Him for what we need today, of course, but let us every time we come into His presence and we ask Him for something let us remember that we should also be grateful ,we should also offer our homage. We should come into His presence even if we feel nothing. Even if we go again, and again, and again and again, and again, and nothing better seems to happen, good – now we are coming to Him for Him, not for us. Not for what we get out of it but because He is God. And right now if you take your next breath, God just gave you something. The breath after that, God just gave you something. The Eucharist today, God will give you something. There isn't a moment of your life where God isn't giving you everything, not a moment. You'd cease to exist, cease to exist if God would ever stop giving to you for a second. But that is not why we seek Him. We seek Him for His sake not for ours.

May each of you know His love today and forever, amen.