

## Bulletin: Epiphany, Sunday January 8, 2017

### **HOMILY: An Epiphany**

#### **WORK IN ALASKA**

When I first came to Alaska in 1983 I had a job as a construction worker. It fizzled out six days after I started. I then found a job painting houses. One person's house I was painting worked for Arco Alaska. She told me I should apply for a job. I got a job as computer graphics specialist in the exploration drafting department. After two years I felt it was a dead end job.

#### **UNDERSTAND, PRAY, SUFFER, THANKS**

I came to a new **understanding**. I started thinking about college. I **prayed** about it. I decided to attend the University of Alaska Fairbanks. It meant quitting my high paying job. It meant **suffering** because of the income loss, the transition, and moving away from friends. Finally, I received a business degree and became a Confirmed Catholic. I **thanked** God for turning my life around.

#### **EPIPHANY DEFINED**

What made me quit my job at Arco and go to College? I call it an Epiphany. An Epiphany is spark of spiritual inspiration. It is an intuitive grasp of reality through a simple and striking event. It is a divine sign spurring us into action. In the gospel the very idea of Gentiles coming to celebrate the birth of a Jewish Messiah is an Epiphany.

#### **RECOGNIZE AN EPIPHANY**

We can all have Epiphanies. They appear when we recognize the light of Christ in our lives? Epiphanies enlighten us to a new understanding causing us to change to a holier way of life.

#### **EXAMPLE OF EPIPHANY**

For example: You dropped out of college years ago, but you recently made plans to return. I had friend in college. He kept looking at x rated websites. He took out the modem card, broke it, and chucked it out the window.

#### **SYMBOLS OF EPIPHANY**

Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh clues us in on the events that take place during an epiphany.

GOLD symbolizes a new understanding. It represents new wisdom.

FRANKINCENSE symbolizes divinity and prayer. It points to a holy way of living that has come into the world in Jesus Christ.

MYRRH symbolizes the suffering involved in changing your way of life. It foretells the cross. It reminds you always of the price we must pay for anything worthwhile.

### **HOW EPIPHANY WORKS**

How does an epiphany work?

GOLD reminds us to call on the Holy Spirit for openness to a new **understanding** or Epiphany. Have you ever had a real tough decision to make? Struggling with that decision may be an Epiphany in the making. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you in that decision.

FRANKINCENSE reminds us we have to **pray**. Pray every day about that new understanding, that inspiration, that epiphany you have received. Is that new understanding something that will make your life better and holier?

MYRRH reminds us that an Epiphany requires us to make a significant change for the better. That usually involves **suffering**. Call on Jesus to help you through that suffering.

### **REMEMBER TO THANK GOD**

Finally, **thank** God for that better and holier lifestyle (482 Words with story).

### **READINGS**

Isaiah 60: 1-6

Rise up in splendor! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you. See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples; But upon you the LORD shines, and over you appears his glory. Nations shall walk by your light, and kings by your shining radiance. 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. Then you shall be radiant at what you see, your heart shall throb and overflow, For the riches of the sea shall be

emptied out before you, the wealth of nations shall be brought to you. Caravans of camels shall fill you, dromedaries from Midian and Ephah; All from Sheba shall come bearing gold and frankincense, and proclaiming the praises of the LORD.

Ephesians 3: 2-3a & 5-6

Brothers and sisters, you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for your benefit, (namely, that) the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly earlier, which was not made known to human beings in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Mat 2: 1-12 – “When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem saying, Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage. When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet: And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel. Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word that I too may go and do him homage. After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way” (Mat 2: 1-12).

## **INTERCESSIONS**

### **Celebrant**

God our Father brought the wise men from a great distance into loving closeness with his Son. He does the same for us now.

**Lector**

For the pope and all believers, that they may carry the light of faith to all in darkness, we pray to the Lord.

For the leaders of nations, that they may respect religious freedom, we pray to the Lord.

For those who suffer religious persecution, that they may be allowed to freely practice their faith in Jesus Christ, we pray to the Lord.

For all children in the world, especially those at **N and N** that they may be a sign of God's love, we pray to the Lord.

For all those who are sick, of body and mind: may they know the unconditional love of the Father for them, and the comfort and strength of his Holy Spirit, we pray to the Lord.

For the dead of all times and places, but especially our own departed, that God may grant them a merciful judgment, we pray to the Lord.

In Silence let us now add our own intentions for our community and for the world.....We pray to the Lord.

**Celebrant**

Father, you know our deepest needs better than we know them ourselves. Come to our aid. We ask this through Christ our Lord.