

# Epiphany January 6, 2019

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

It is a bit surprising that the account of the Magi is found in the Gospel composed by St. Matthew. The traditional understanding is that Matthew's account is primarily addressed to persons of Jewish background. Why would he tell of persons who were foreigners of a different religious tradition? After all, the Israelites of old, the people, culture and Faith among whom Jesus was born, were known as the "Chosen People" They were a limited group who were the first means by whom the revelation of God took place.

Although Matthew was addressing listeners of Jewish tradition and background, the presence of the Magi in his account makes



clear the universality of the Gospel message. The revealing presence of the God-made-man is available to every person. At the same time, it also suggests the universality of the dignity of all persons. There is no exclusivity to the revelation of God's love.

Indeed, the inclusion of the account of the Magi declares that all humanity is invited to respond to the revelation of God that begins to unfold with the birth in Bethlehem. Echoing the prophet Isaiah, persons from throughout the world were coming – not only to see what had taken place, but also to be affected by it. The Lord had come into the world, God was in

our midst, to be revealed to all and to everyone.

The Magi stand as a reminder to us of ourselves. We are part of the whole world to whom the Lord is revealed. It is through us that the Lord is to be known to the world.

In Matthew's account, the Magi saw a star. They were moved by it. They responded to it. In doing so, they began a procession leading others to the object of that sign, the Incarnate Word. God in our midst.

We are to be the Magi of today. We have seen and celebrated the Lord coming into our midst. By our baptism, the Lord became directly a part of our lives. We were made holy and called to continue to be holy. It is incumbent on us to do the same as the Magi and lead others to the Lord.

The Feast of the Epiphany that we celebrate today not only recalls that the Lord was revealed to the world in history, but also that he is to be shown forth now. The light of the Lord which lit up the darkness then is to shine brightly in us now. We are to reflect that light and lead others, by our lives, to that light. Let it be that our lives, what we are and what we do, in word and in action, not hinder but encourage, not hide but reveal, the transforming effect of true faith and trust in our good and gracious God.