

# Epiphany of the Lord January 5, 2020

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

Another name which might be given to this Feast of the Epiphany, or Feast of the Three Kings, or Feast of the Magi, is the "Feast of Inclusion." "Drawing in" or "Including" is a clear lesson that is conveyed by what we, as Church, recall today. It is a lesson that there are no restrictions or limits or borders to the extent of God's love for humanity demonstrated by the birth of the God-made-man, Jesus Christ.

Consider what we have heard from Isaiah as he spoke to the Chosen People of old. They had suffered exile from their homeland, the Promised Land. In exile they had experienced and influenced other peoples, so that the return from exile would affect not only the Chosen People but also a large part of the whole world. From near and far people were going to participate in this new era, this new beginning that would take place.

Then we heard that Saint Paul, who had been a Pharisee, a strict observer of the Law, was not just 'including the Gentiles, the non Jews, the foreigners as recipients of his preaching and of baptism, he was actively going out to bring them in, to include them.. Paul declares that the Gentiles are co-heirs with the Jews. This was an opinion that clearly was not held by all the Apostles at the beginning. Thus there was a struggle between Peter and Paul until the Apostles realized that this God's intentions were for all the world to be

included.

It is then from Matthew, who addressed his account of the Gospel primarily to persons of Jewish origin and tradition, that the story of the Kings or Magi is heard. It is Matthew who emphasizes that from all over the world people would come to see what had happened. They were not only to see, they were to be affected. Having seen the newborn King, the Magi changed direction and return by another way. The Lord had come into the world, God was in our midst. All the world would come to see him. All the world is to be changed, transformed..

The Feast of the Epiphany not only recalls that the Lord was revealed to the world in history, but it also reminds us and urges us to show him forth, to reveal him, to the world now. The light of the Lord which lit up the darkness then is to shine brightly now in us as we lead others, by our lives, to that light.

In coming into our world in Jesus Christ, the Lord God called all of us, included all of us, in Divine Love. It is for us truly to reveal the Lord to all we meet, to live lives that do not