Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





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“Go and search diligently for the child” (Matt 2:8).

Isa 60:1-6; Ps 72; Eph 2:2-3a, 5-6; Matt 2:1-12

An epiphany is a moment of sudden insight when the full meaning of something is grasped, when we connect the dots and see the whole in all its parts, including our place within some larger design that had until then been hidden from us.

Personal epiphanies come in dreams, conversations, encounters and chance experiences, usually when we are ready to grasp some new and surprising truth.

The Feast of the Epiphany is about expanding the message of Christmas that the birth of the child Jesus was more than a messianic fulfillment for Israel. It was also the arrival of the universal Christ, the Light of the World meant for both Jews and Gentiles.

As a liturgical celebration, the Epiphany offers new light into the meaning of the Incarnation for all the baptized. Jesus is both divine and human, but his unique identity also transforms all human beings. Our human lives are now open to life with God. Discipleship links our human growth to maturity to the action of grace perfecting human nature. God’s gift of mercy enables us to share the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. We advance in holiness by dying to ourselves and rising to greater selflessness in him. What Jesus experienced in his human sojourn is now available to us, teaching us to live the image and likeness God as he did.

The story of the magi serves as a moving narrative to help us understand the truth of the Epiphany. Whatever its historical basis, the elements of the story convey the call to journey in faith to find, know and love God in all things. The contrast between the magi and Herod defines the light and darkness evident in our world in people who accept or reject God’s invitation to insight and conversion.

To be wise, as the magi were, is to listen to the longing in our hearts, to pursue God as the Source of love and meaning. Herod, blinded by his own fear of potential rivals, stops at nothing, even the murder of children, to protect his fragile grip on power. He lives in moral darkness, empty of compassion and truth, corrupt and estranged from his own humanity.

The star appears only to those who seek its guidance. The magi find their heart’s desire in following it to the child, whose hidden identity is revealed to them and to the simple shepherds who have heard the voices of angels in the night. The Epiphany is for all those who seek Jesus diligently and lovingly.

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