

HOMILY ~ THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

JANUARY 4/5, 2025

***I wonder as I wander out under the sky.
How Jesus the Savior had come for to die,
for poor lonely creatures like you and like I.
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.***

Do you ever wonder about these things? I have been reading recently about wonder. For this Homily, I am defining wonder as being open to our experiences and being curious about the meaning. When we wonder, we have to be open to our experiences. We spend much of our lives on automatic pilot and have a knee jerk reaction to them. Sometimes we spend so much time ruminating about the past or planning for the future that we miss our present experiences. We have to be curious about the meaning of our experiences. We need to sit with them for a while and pray about them. We need to be open to the intuition that we get from God about the meaning and then maybe have the courage to follow our intuition.

Today we celebrate The Epiphany of the Lord. An epiphany is a moment of revelation and understanding from God. We hear about an epiphany in the Gospel reading that the wise men received. Now the wise men, Herod, the chief priests and the scribes all had access to the same information; however, it was an epiphany only to the wise men but not Herod, the chief priests or the scribes. What was the difference? I think the wise men were the only ones who wondered about their experience of the star, were curious about its meaning, had an intuition about its meaning, followed that intuition and came in search of the newborn King of the Jews. Herod, the chief priests and the scribes had a knee jerk reaction, and they just saw the newborn King of the Jews as a threat and wanted to eliminate him. They did not have the epiphany.

I think we have little epiphanies in our lives, but we are not always open to them. We spend too much of our lives on automatic pilot. We also approach our experiences as if there were only one correct conclusion. Frequently there is more than one right answer, more than one possible meaning; and we need to find the appropriate meaning for ourselves. When we discern God's will, sometimes we just tell God in prayer what we want and then wait for it to happen. Prayer is important in discernment, but we also need to be open to our experiences. How is God speaking to us through our experiences? You have to identify your stars. Maybe your star is what people are telling you. If multiple people are telling you the same thing, maybe you need to wonder about that. If the same opportunity keeps

offering itself to you, maybe you need to wonder about that. If something is closed to you repeatedly, maybe you need to wonder about that. If something happens in your life that you did not expect or you did not want, but you cannot change, maybe you need to wonder about it. Be curious about the meaning that it has in our life. Take it to prayer. What is your gut feeling about it? What intuition are you getting from it? Are you brave enough to make some changes in your life? Change is hard. It takes courage.

Sometimes we get complacent in our faith. Sometimes we think we know everything we will ever know about God. Maybe we stop listening to God. We do not want to miss the epiphanies. Maybe we need to wonder about the place that Jesus has in our lives. Is he at the center or is he kind of off to the side. Does Jesus get the time that is leftover after we do everything else? Do you think about him and reach out to him only when you are in trouble. Maybe we need to wonder about what it means to us to be Catholic. Maybe we need to wonder about the place that St. Edith has in our lives. Maybe we need to wonder about the importance coming to Mass has in our lives. Maybe we need to wonder about the importance of personal prayer. I wonder.

Love and Peace,

Fr. Jim