

HOMILY FOR EPIPHANY SUNDAY 2015

1. Christmas is all about light
 - a. Jesus is the light of the world
 - b. He has come to fill us with the light of God's love
 - c. The darkness of the world around us reminds us of where we would be without God
 - d. Darkness is a good symbol for evil, in darkness we easily stumble
 - i. It is in darkness that we feel most vulnerable
 - ii. Feels like most crimes happen in darkness, for in darkness predators can easily hide
 - e. So we celebrate with lights and light shows giving glory to God, rejoicing that the darkness of the world is being lifted
2. The feast of Epiphany reminds us that darkness does not give up easily
 - a. the lengthening of the days is so gradual after the solstice, do not notice
 - b. Power of evil remains ever present even with birth of Jesus
3. Magi, studying the stars, see a new star that tells them a new born king has been born in Judea
 - a. The gifts they bring for this new king shows that they recognize Him to be king not just for Judea but for the nations
 - b. The magi represent the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah that the light of Jerusalem would shine in the midst of the darkness and gloom that covers the earth
 - c. For Israel the earth is covered by the darkness of unbelief
 - d. Even their king Herod, is really a puppet king for the Roman empire
 - e. Story of the Magi has tension built into it
 - f. They follow the star to Jerusalem and go naturally to the palace of the King to see if he has been born there
 - i. Where else would one expect to find a king but in the royal palace
 - g. Herod, unknown to the Magi, has a reputation
 - i. He has killed even his own sons, when he thought they might be a threat
 - ii. He knows there is no newborn king born in the palace

- iii. He has the scholars check the prophecies to find where this king might be
 - h. Tells the Magi, he should be in Bethlehem, asks them to return and tell him where this king is, so he can worship
 - i. Looks like darkness in form of Herod has a plan to destroy light of world
 - j. When Magi do find Jesus in Bethlehem, warned by an angel not to return to Herod
- 4. Light of the world survives to spread the light to the world
 - a. Jesus when his time comes to fullness, goes out to be baptized by John and proclaim the good news of God
 - b. Because the light of the world has survived we have hope
 - c. Even though we have to struggle with darkness around and within us
 - i. If we are honest, none of us are as good and holy as we would like to be
 - d. Message Jesus brings to us as a result of Epiphany is that God loves despite our weakness and failures
 - e. Great paradox of our faith, is that God loves us most for our failures
 - f. He wants to be present in our lives, to heal us, to give us hope and comfort
- 5. Jesus invites us to have our own moments of Epiphany
 - a. By accepting our weakness and failures, by asking for His love and forgiveness
 - b. We will discover that God is truly living within us
 - c. Especially in the Eucharist when we unite ourselves to Jesus Death and Resurrection in communion
 - i. We see that God has filled even our spirits with His light
 - ii. He considers us to be holy and beloved children
 - iii. All we have to do in this Eucharist is join with the Church and say
 - iv. Oh, thank you, Father for making me holy by sending the Holy Spirit upon me