

The Epiphany of the Lord 2020

Looking up Epiphany I found this definition that truly hits on today's readings as it gives us a great spiritual meaning of Epiphany?

“An Epiphany is a relatively common occurrence within a spiritual journey, before and specially after Spiritual Awakening. It means you have turned a partial belief into a more complete view of reality. You could say the process of Spiritual Awakening is one Big epiphany.”

Into a more complete view of reality. Our First reading predicts the arrival of gifts of frankincense and gold and proclamation of praises of the Lord. In our second reading St Paul tells us that the Jews as well as the Gentiles are co-heirs to the promise of Christ Jesus.

Then in our Gospel we see the magi coming from the east to bring homage to the child.

The magi represent so much they are gentiles not Jewish, they are learned men of science, but yet they come, along with the shepherds and those of lesser learning. They used the science of astronomy not as a religion but as a study of God's creation to lead them to the arrival of the one who would put it all together. They also once seeing the True Son of God had to go another way home to prevent the child from being misused by the political forces of the day. This is quite an ancient account but so much like our world today. Christians in so much of our world are persecuted for their faith. So many refuses to see science as a study of God's creation and want to make it a new religion that espouses all sorts of human developed philosophy that denies a creator who had a purpose for His creation. Every inventor or designer had a purpose for their creation, instructions were made for a purpose and the steps in the manual are to be followed for a purpose. My most vivid memory of trying to outsmart the instruction sheet was putting together a grill. Thinking at one point that doing step three before step two would be so much more convenient than

what the instructions showed. I mean what could it hurt until I realized very soon that I would have a wobbly grill for the rest of its life. It made quite the conversation piece at family cookouts. But the fact that the grill wobbled was not a result of the designer but my own disobedience to the steps ... of a moment of thinking that I was smarter than the person who designed the grill.

The magi looked to the heavens and above themselves to seek their answers they understood that faith and spiritual growth is a process and one that takes prayerful study and above all of knowing who is the creator and who is the created.

At times we can all feel like a magi on a camel in the desert or a shepherd in the field with a flock, seeking something we don't fully understand. We can get lost in a sea of media and voices and toxic opinions.

One of the things the magi taught us is to focus and I would like to share with you a comment a friend once told me that her spiritual

director had said to her, that we only need 3 books to read I am assuming he took the Bible for an obvious #4. But they were:

1. The Study of a Soul by St Therese of Liseux
2. The Imitation of Christ Thomas a Kempis

And I forgot the other but it does make sense

Sometimes less is more. But of course, you must remember that I am the guy of the wobbly grill so I humbly would add to that list the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It is important that if we disagree with Church teaching that we at least should know what we are disagreeing with. Let this set us off on our own following of the star this New Year.

May we keep in mind the line in the definition of epiphany:

“You could say the process of Spiritual Awakening is one Big epiphany.”

May this New Year be a year of spiritual awakening for us all.