

Ephiphany B

REVELATION OF CHRIST TO THE WORLD

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www.sjti.ac.za/resources_homily.htm








First Reading: *Isaiah 60:1-6*

Response: *“All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord” (Ps.71:11)*

Responsorial Psalm: *Psalm 71:2,7-8,10-13*

Second Reading: *Ephesians 3:2-3,5-6*

Gospel: *Matthew 2:1-12.*

What is the Epiphany? It is a Greek word meaning a divine revelation. Hebrew for Epiphany is        , *Galah Shekinah*, a ‘showing forth,’ ‘revealing the Presence of God’ to the world, viz. the gentile world, as seen in the three kings from the east.

*“We three kings of Orient are;
Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.*

*O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to your Perfect Light.”*

(John Henry Hopkins, 1857)

“*All nations shall fall prostrate before you*” (Ps.71.11) is represented by the three wise men coming into the Presence of the Lord Jesus Christ; and divine revelation given to the gentiles.

In Christ you see that the “*light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you*” (Is.60:1) and you will “*grow radiant, your hearts will rejoice*” (Is.60:4).

We should be “*overjoyed*” like kings, the three wise men, “*on seeing the star*” (Matt.2:11) and follow it to the very source of light with our “*hearts throbbing and full*” (Is.60:4).

Paul considers such experiences of divine encounter as blessings not just for himself but the “*graces of God bestowed on him for your sake*” (Eph.3:2).

In being chosen by God’s grace, how do we use our gifts in service of the Lord? The wise men “*offered him their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh*” (Matt.2:12).

The Epiphany begins with the revelation of Jesus Christ in his Incarnation. It continues in the mystery of his Presence, *Shekinah*, as the Risen Lord in our lives today.

*“Glorious now behold Him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice;
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Earth to heaven replies.*

*O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to your Perfect Light.”*

The Lord is present and reveals himself in mystery of his **Word**. Are our hearts burning when we hear it and use the Bible as our guiding star through this desert of life? (Matt.2:11).

Jesus is with us always, *Emmanuel*. Are you with him? The Feast of the Epiphany **celebrates** how he first came and is recognized as the Saviour of the world, Christ the Lord.

Where can we find and approach Him today?

In **Word, Sacrament, Church Teachings** and **Christian Witness**, in the full **Tradition** of the Church.

At Christmas we received God's gift, his beloved Son. What is our gift to God? Can you be generous with the Lord? Can this be a year of a deeper relationship with Christ?

FOR THE CHILDREN

Look at the crib or a picture of it. **Where are the wise men? Do they come before or after the shepherds? What is the significance of local shepherds and foreign wise men?**

What are the wise men (three kings) doing?

They are offering their gifts.

Why did they come and kneel and offer their gifts to Jesus?

Epiphany is time to make an offering to God. **What is your offering and New Year resolutions?**

FOR TEENAGERS (Shared Christian Praxis)

What does Epiphany mean to you?

Has God's revelation made any difference to your life and those around you?

Explain revelation according to the teachings of the Church.

How much do you accept and experience revelation within the Church and without?

What gifts have you to share with the Lord and with others in order to help them know God?



Holy Epiphany

RCIA

The gentiles in the wise men, recognize Christ in the crib. This Promise of God will be also proclaimed by the Jews, 'oudepote ephane', never has such a thing become manifest in Israel (Matt.9:33). Never has Israel seen such a phenomenon.(i) Note, '**phenomenon**,' has the same root as '**ephane**,' 'it appeared,' referring to Jesus' manifestation in Israel.(ii) "The *magi*'s coming to Jerusalem in order to pay homage to the king of the Jews, show that they seek in Israel, in the messianic light of the star of David, the one who will be king of the nations." (CCC. 528) *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

"The Epiphany is the manifestation of Jesus as Messiah of Israel, Son of God and Saviour of the world. The great feast of the Epiphany is celebrated in the adoration of Jesus by the *magi*, together with his baptism in the Jordan and wedding feast at Cana. "In the *magi*, who are representatives of the neighbouring pagan religions, the Gospel sees the firstfruits of the nations who welcome the good news of salvation through the Incarnation."(CCC. *ibid.*)

(i) LEIVA-MERIKAKIS Erasmo. **Fire of Mercy, Heart of the Word. Vol.I.** Ignatius Press, S F, USA. 1996. p.510

(ii) *Ibid.*

LIFE EXPERIENCE: *Reality in our hometown, Pietermaritzburg*

The long awaited baby safe has arrived in Pietermaritzburg! The baby safe is an alternative to dumping unwanted babies in public toilets or rubbish bins. When a mother places her baby in the safe, we are immediately notified by Voice Call. The safe will call three numbers and continues to call until one of us responds to the call. As a back-up, the safe will sms the three numbers once the baby is collected. We then look after him/her until the baby is adopted.



The safe has specific installation requirements. We are currently in negotiation with a church at the bottom of Longmarket Street. This location is perfect as it is central; it's near an informal settlement and best of all it is 600m away from Midlands Medical Centre. Next step forward is creating awareness. To do this we need sponsors for printing flyers, posters, etc. Please contact us if you can help. We need sponsors for the installation of the safe. This will be a big job, as the church has a palisade fence around

it, we have to build onto the fence. We need to get it installed urgently and need to get the premises ready. There have been 4 dead babies found in the last 2 weeks. The sooner we get the safe up and going, the sooner we prevent these deaths.

Urgent needs to finish the premises:- Blankets, baby bath, clothes, bottles, nappies, etc.

Financial needs:- Telephone bills, salary for two full time members, medical costs, petrol.

Wish list for the future:- Extend premises to save more babies from surrounding areas.

Contact: Rene Morcom 033-3475544. www.pregnancyassist.co.za

(N.B.: This notice is abbreviated due to lack of space)

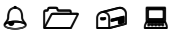
Personal Postscript: Henry Fielding, in similar circumstances, when writing about the adoption of Tom Jones, a foundling, declares that such mothers seem to have abandoned their humanity as they parted with their chastity.⁽ⁱ⁾

*(i) FIELDING Henry. **The History of TOM JONES A Foundling.** Wordsworth Classics, London. 1999. P.20.*

LITTLE ANGELINA

Angelina was mystified over the word 'Magi', in the Gospel. Her father explained how the word 'magic' comes from 'magi,' interpreted as 'wise men.' He corrected her pronunciation to be 'maji', not 'maggie'. Maggie was also a name that Angelina knew very well. It referred to her great aunt, who created tensions in the family, not by any means of magic but just being cantankerous. Visits from such a person as Maggie, not *Magi*, could dampen the spirit of Christmas. However, that was the adults' problem, not Angelina's. In fact, in the spirit of the *Magi* she was happy to give Maggie a Christmas present.

IMPORTANT WORD: +B4N∇<4∇ (Epiphania), Manifestation of God

The Greek word +B4N∇<4∇, *Epiphania* refers to the manifestation of God. Hebrew describes it as , *Galah Shekinah*, which means 'revealing the presence of God.' In the present context, it is the revelation of Jesus to the gentiles. The gentiles are represented by the *magi*, also known as wise men or kings. "Their coming means that pagans can discover Jesus and turning towards the Jews and receiving from them the messianic promise as contained in the Old Testament. The Epiphany shows that 'the full number of the nations' now 'takes its place in the family of the patriarchs', and acquires *Israelitica dignitas* (is made 'worthy of the heritage of Israel')." (CCC. 528)

Watchword: “*They did him homage. Then opening their treasures, offered him gifts*”
(Matt.2:11)

Hebrew: 

Weyishtaxavu - lo wayiftehū ‘eth - ‘otsrotem wayaqrivu lo minhah.

Greek: ΑΔΞΦ,6Λ<0ΦV< VΛδΤ 6V4 V<4>V<δ,H δΞΛH 20ΦVΛΔΞΛH VΛδΞ<
BΛΞΦ-

0<,(6V< VΛδΤ *TΔV.

Prosekunesan auto kai anoiksantes tous thesaurus auton prosenenkan auto dora.

Latin: Adoraverunt eum; et apertis thesauris suis, obtulerunt ei munera.

Portuguese: O adoraram; e, abrindo os seus tesouros, lhe ofertaram dadivas.

Spanish: Lo adoraron; y abriendo sus tesoros, le ofrecieron presentes.

French: Et adorerent l'enfant; puis ils ouvrirent leurs bagages et lui offrirent des cadeaux.

Afrikaans: En aan Hom hulde bewys. Daarna het hulle hulle reissakke oopgemaak en vir Hom geskenke uitgehaal.

Zulu: Zakhuleka kuye zavula amagugu azo zethula izipho kuye.

Xhosa: Zaqubuda, zamnqula; zaza zathi, zivule iingxowa zazo, zanikela kuye ngezipho.

Sotho: Mme ba kgumamela ngwana, ba nto bula matlole a bona, ba mo nye-hella ka dimpho.

-o000o-

CATECHETICS

Lesson 55:

CATECHESIS IN MODERN TIMES: BIBLE-BASED CATECHESIS

The beginning of this course emphasized the importance of Scripture in catechesis. As a pillar of the faith, it can be the basis of catechesis. The *Kerygmatic approach* is an example of this. **Biblical-based** catechesis is more than just teaching the Word of God, it means the Bible playing an active part in our lives.

Perhaps we can learn from the Jews today on how to reverence the Bible, how the Sacred Scriptures are revered in their liturgies and in their daily lives in their homes. Every Jewish home has a **Mezuzah**. It is a text of the bible fixed to the doorpost and when anyone leaves or enters the house, they kiss the *Mezuzah*, which involves placing your hand on the text and kissing the hand that touched the **word of God**. Many Christian homes in Wentworth, Durban, are doing the same, encouraging reverence for the Scriptures. Persons interested in knowing more about the *Mezuzah* and how to use it, may make contact through the following email address: viz. www.siti.ac.za/resources_homily.htm, as given in the title of the

homily above. One could also do an **Enthronement of the Bible** giving it a place of prominence in the home.

Biblical catechesis happens in our liturgies and could develop in many ways, such as in the **homily**. The Sunday readings of the **lectionary** are material to be used over a three year cycle, as done in the RCIA. These texts or any other biblical texts can be pondered upon as a **Lectio Divina**, *i.e.* reading the sacred texts and using them for meditation. **SCC's** (Small Christian Communities) have group sharing of the Word of God. Here catechesis involves reading the word, pondering it, and sharing it with life experiences which lead further in relationship and commitments, to God and to neighbour.

Basically, Bible-based catechesis, is hearing and **listening** to the word of God, letting God speak, guiding the person to understand and obey. The responses are: "Not my will, but thy will be done", "Speak Lord your servant is listening", "Here I am Lord, I come to do your will." The Bible is the revelation of God's will for you. This is what a catechesis based on the word of God is all about.

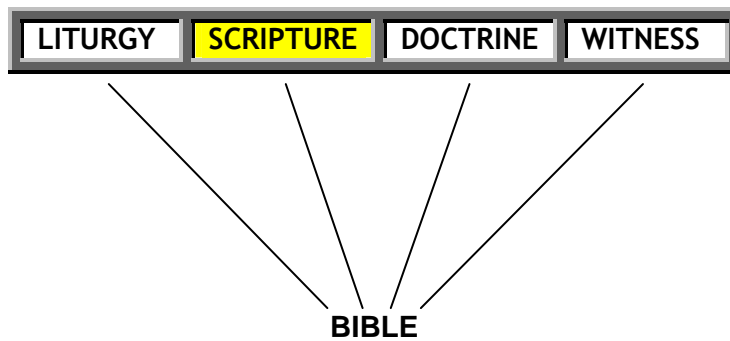
Lessons to follow, demonstrate each of the elements of the dynamic **Tradition** of our Faith as given below:

KOINONIA	LITURGEIA	WORD	KERYGMA	CATECHESIS	MARTYRIA	DIAKONIA
COMMUNITY	WORSHIP	BIBLE	PREACHING	TEACHING	LIFE	MINISTRY
CHURCH	LITURGY	SCRIPTURE	PROCLAMATION	DOCTRINE	WITNESS	SERVICE

Basically, from the dynamic elements of our **Tradition**, portrayed above, we emphasize:

Four Pillars of our Faith, namely,

SACRED SCRIPTURE:



The graphic illustration above is supposed to illustrate that **Bible-based** catechesis should not be seen apart from the pillars of our faith but in the full context of the Tradition of the Church.