

## Epiphany of the Lord

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

In the third century BCE, Archimedes, the Greek mathematician, discovered the principle of buoyancy while he was sitting in a bathtub. Reportedly, this caused him to run naked in the streets of Syracuse shouting 'Eureka!' (I have it!). People have called this eureka moment an 'epiphany' for Archimedes; an instant when a light suddenly clicked on and a scientific principle was revealed to him.

But this is simply a case of the secular world adopting and mis-using a Christian term. The Oxford Dictionary gives only two definitions for the word 'epiphany': manifestation of Christ to the Magi, and manifestation of a superhuman being. There is no other definition.

This Sunday, the Church celebrates the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. Jesus is revealed as God to the wise men. As we read in the Gospel, the wise men journeyed a long distance following a star until they were led to the infant Jesus. Overwhelmed with joy, they entered and adored Him. These men from a distant country, likely pagan mathematicians and astrologers, recognized Jesus for who He was: God.

The wise men did not have a eureka moment. They experienced an Epiphany. The revelation of God did not come to them in a moment of inspiration. Instead, the Epiphany was a result of a long period of studying the stars and other signs signalling the coming of the Lord. The wise men embarked on a long journey not knowing exactly where they were going but travelling with faith following the light of a star to find the light of Jesus Christ.

They found the light that was prophesied by Isaiah to the Jewish people hundreds of years earlier when they were a conquered and despondent nation in need of hope: *For darkness shall cover the earth and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and His glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.*

What about us? Have we experienced the Epiphany of the Lord? In Bethlehem, Jesus waited for the wise men to come to Him so He could reveal Himself as God to them. Today, Jesus waits for us in the tabernacle, in the Blessed Sacrament chapel, so He can reveal Himself to us. Have we followed the light of faith and journeyed to find Jesus, the light of the world?

The wise men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to pay homage to the Lord. St. Bruno of Segni, an eleventh century bishop, explains how the Church continues to offer gold, frankincense and myrrh to Jesus every day:

*She offers Him frankincense by acknowledging and believing Him to be the true Lord and Creator of all. She offers Him myrrh when she affirms that He assumed the substance of our flesh, in which He willed to suffer and to die for our salvation. And she offers Him gold by believing without doubt that He reigns eternally with the Father and the Holy Spirit.*

The Psalmist wrote: *Lord, every nation on earth will adore You.* Isaiah prophesied: *Nations shall come to your light, kings to the brightness of your dawn.* Jesus is for everyone. He waits to reveal Himself to all who make the journey in faith to find Him. There has been so much darkness in our lives over the past two years. Let us all experience our own Epiphany and allow the light of Jesus Christ to dispel the darkness.