

January 6-7, 2006

The Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6

Ephesians 3:2-6

Matthew 2:1-12

What drives people to follow their dreams? What compels people to endure hardship in order to accomplish a goal? How do we discern a true 'star' from a false 'bright idea' that may mislead? With Epiphany we bring the Nativity Narrative to its completion and with tomorrow's Baptism of the Lord, we tidy up the Christmas Season in its entirety for another year. The trash trucks have removed most of the fire-prone curbside Christmas trees and many of our homes have already been tidied in preparation for the fresh start of January. Yet, the Church has once again held our attention on the event of Christmas, not on the popular, commercial images of the event, but rather, on the more profound meanings of the Incarnation. What does it truly mean to have had God become one with us? What does it mean that Jesus was fully human and fully divine? In some people's rush to witness 'the end of the world', what might it mean that God himself would come and languish in our midst as one of us? As understood within the literary background of the Nativity Narratives, the Magi or Wise Men are compelling figures for the rest of the Gospel of Matthew (keeping in mind that they only appear in Matthew, like Shepherds only appear in Luke...hmmm, might be worthwhile to ponder the literary reasons for that.) The Magi speak of SEARCHING, of following and pursuing something that cannot be explained with reliance on fact or science. Another interesting perspective is of a God who would provide celestial guideposts to assist the Magi in their quest? How about today, in the here-and-now of Aliso Viejo, might God still be providing us with 'stars' by which to guide us to a fresh rebirth of Jesus? Are we content to keep looking for him where we think we found him in the past, or are we willing to follow a 'hunch', an 'intuition', a bright light that might lead us elsewhere? The New Year of 2007 is well underway; the Rose Parade floats have been consigned to the compost piles of Pasadena. What are your dreams for 2007? What hardships will you willingly endure to accomplish your personal or familial goal? Is a pursuit of Jesus a part of those dreams and goals?

As we bid farewell to the Christmas Season, thank you for having been with us in our first celebration of the season in our new Grand Hall. All things considered, it seems to have been quite successful...thanks to you and your kindness and hospitality to all our visitors who joined with us for the Masses. Please accept a Bulletin on your way home, a New Year necessarily brings new events and new opportunities...and the Bulletin is pretty good place to find out what those might be. In these first weeks of 2007, remember, you are loved. FKB