

This Sunday, we celebrate the Feast of The Epiphany of the Lord, during which we remember that the Good News of Jesus Christ is meant not only for a particular group of people, but for the whole world. In our Gospel reading from Matthew, we hear the account of the arrival of three magi from the east, who come to visit the baby Jesus and do Him homage. This tells us that from the very beginning of Jesus' life on earth, His mission was to extend beyond the people of Israel.

What is our role, as we continue Jesus' mission to the world? From the story of the magi, we get three images that I think can help us understand our calling as disciples of Christ.

We are called to be **Seekers** – The magi come to Jerusalem and ask, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews?” No matter where we may be in our spiritual development, we are invited to come closer and closer to Jesus. We are to be like the magi, seeking to know “the newborn king of the Jews.” If we feel we know all that we need to know, and have progressed as far as we need to progress, we are deluding ourselves. There is always more that Jesus can teach us about His love for us, and about how He wants us to follow Him.

We are called to be **Signs** – The magi also say when they arrive in Jerusalem, “We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.” As we seek to come closer to Christ, we know there are many others who are searching for greater meaning in their lives, or are trying to find something or someone to hold on to. Perhaps we are called to be “stars” that can point the way to Jesus. If people were to say, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews,” would they find Him in us, or in the church?

We are called to be **Gifts** – When the magi eventually find Jesus, with Mary and Joseph, they prostrate themselves. They open “their treasures” and offer Jesus “gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.” In helping others find God's love in Jesus Christ, we are called to offer not only the gifts that we have, but the gifts that we *are*. We are called to offer ourselves in service of the Gospel. Why? Look at the words from our first reading from Isaiah: “See, darkness covers the earth, and thick clouds cover the peoples.” In so many ways, there is still darkness, as war and terror and violence continue. So many people are covered by the “thick clouds” of poverty and oppression and hopelessness and addiction. And if we have experienced the light of Christ driving away the darkness in our lives, so we must help others share the same experience.

If we are open to be seekers, signs, and gifts, we will truly continue the epiphany we celebrate. We will help reveal to the world God's love in Jesus Christ.

May God continue to bless us all, and may we be a blessing to others.

In Christ,

Phil, CP