

Homily010222

## YOU ALL TELL HIS STORY IN MANY VARIED WAYS

A very common human experience is to be present among family or friends when there is a new mom and dad and a tiny baby. (Like today.) Everyone is captivated by the scene and everyone looks at the tiny child and the perfection in fingernails and eyelashes and a sleeping countenance. We are captivated at the new life given to us. Our God is not looking so much at our failures and sins. God never gives up on us. I wonder how many newborns you have seen in your lifetime. How many have you held or fed or caressed or nestled? Each newborn has this capacity to draw us in even if for a moment.

But those Magi from the East. How many babes had they seen in their lifetime and in their travels? What is different with this one? Don't all newborns look the same? But remember this: there were the shepherds who were confronted with angels singing in the fields. Then, there was Simeon in the Temple who lifts the child and proclaims, "Now Lord you may dismiss your servant for my eyes have seen the glory of the Lord and the salvation of your people Israel." This child—there was just something about this child—and there would be that reaction to Jesus all throughout his life. For some the encounter with Jesus itself was enough. For others not so.

For the Magi, it was all they needed. They prostrated themselves. Our God has shown and shared his beloved Son. It is the Epiphany of Our Lord. Christ is still showing himself two thousand years later. And many are still being drawn to him and to his difficult but truly saving way of life. It is his gift to us. The renewing of the face of the earth—is underway; even if we forget. The new creation is taking hold; even if we fail to notice. The evil and the wicked which screams for attention is always being undermined by Christ and power of grace; even if we get distracted by the bad news.

On this Epiphany I encourage you to do one thing new this year of 2022. Promise to spend some time each day, and each week looking for the Good News of Jesus Christ that shows itself everywhere. You have found the One your heart desires, the One who feeds your very soul, or you would not be here. You too tell the story. You tell it to your children. You tell it to your brothers and sisters, even to your parents or your grandchildren. You tell the story to your friends and your coworkers and your acquaintances. You tell it by the way you decorate your homes at Christmas. You tell it in the food you prepare and share these two weeks. You tell the story by the way you act in the workplace. You tell the story in the way you raise your children. You bring the story with you wherever you go. You bring light with you wherever you go. It is God's design that this be so.

It is especially true and evident in the Eucharist. I tell the story in the way I celebrate Mass. When I raise the chalice at the moment of consecration, the chalice catches the light from the arch and reflects it. I am always moved right then to speak to the Lord in my own heart. I thank Him for bringing the light into our world and overcoming the darkness. I thank Him for being the light for me and for all of us. I ask Him if he will enter my soul and your soul in that very moment, and banish any darkness that is still there. I ask for the healing of his light to be a salve for the wounds of every one of us. I ask Him to stay awhile and abide within me and within

each of us—forever. I ask Him to shine forth from within me so that I may glow and others may be drawn to Him in love.

But I have found that I must renew this invitation to the Lord because the light in me fades after a time. And when your light seems to dim then you must return to the One who brought that meaning into your very soul from the beginning. Christ is that light and everyone on this planet needs that light. At the crib, before this baby, we can all find it and at that crib every single person is welcome no matter who they are, what their background is or where they come from. All are welcome. That's the meaning the newborn king of the Jews. It is the meaning of each newborn baby. It is also why we gather at Eucharist on His Day each week.

May the Lord bless us today and give us his peace.