



Archdiocese of San Antonio

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Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord

January 3, 2016

“Christ is the Light of nations.” These are the first words of the Church’s Dogmatic Constitution, *Lumen Gentium*, which was promulgated at the Second Vatican Council. This weekend we celebrate Christ as the Light of the whole world on the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. This great feast has a great depth that may sometimes get lost in all of the beautiful traditions surrounding it. We sing the beloved hymn “We Three Kings,” we add the Wise Men to our nativity scenes, and in many cultures gifts are exchanged. But, behind all of these traditions, the true miracle of the Lord’s Epiphany shines.

Take a moment to fully appreciate how amazing the events we celebrate today truly are. These men came from the east – likely from Persia – following an astronomical phenomenon. They were magi, probably not magicians or sorcerers, but definitely astrologers and men who made it their business to read the signs displayed in

creation. These men had no knowledge of Jesus, little if any knowledge of the beliefs of the Jewish people, and no connection to the Covenant which God had cut with His people. And yet, here they were, traversing enormous distances confident that what they saw in the sky – what God had placed in the sky – was vitally important. These were people who were lost were called by God to follow the Son to salvation. So, what we celebrate today is that through Christ's birth the very face of creation tells the truth of what God has done for us. Pope Francis reminded us of this truth in his Encyclical *Laudato Si'*: "The universe as a whole, in all its manifold relationships, shows forth the inexhaustible riches of God" (86). God's light shines forth in his creation, and now all nations can walk by God's glorious light (cf. Is 60:3), and now "the Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel" (Eph 3:6).

In the Christ, the Light of the Nations, our God has invited all people to himself if they are only willing to open their eyes to see the truth written in the fabric world around them. So, today as you celebrate the dawning of the Light of the World, remember your call to delve deeply into the faith. Never stop learning, never stop discovering, pray hard, and keep your eyes open. We must be ready to meet those around us who are looking for answers in the world, so

that we can connect the signs in creation to the truth that has been revealed to us. There is always more to learn about our faith. This Year of Faith is the perfect time to renew your commitment to studying the faith that saves us. Check your parish bulletin for opportunities, classes, and events. Read the Catechism, read the Today's Catholic newspaper, log on to the Archdiocese website, take advantage of Catholic Television and our Catholic radio stations. You married couples, talk about the faith with each other, and above all pray with each other every day! My young friends, stand up for your faith and get excited about it! The wise men traveled across the desert to seek the Lord, and they didn't even have a clue what they were seeking. We have been blessed to know that He who is Love itself has called us to live with Him forever. How much more then must we seek him with our whole heart.

On this holy day, we ask the Holy Spirit to be with us. May the Light of God shine through our words, actions, and witness. We are living in this great time of the New Evangelization, and all creation has been called to open its eyes to see the glory of the Lord. Jesus, Light of the Nations, make us ready to bear your light to the world.