

Reflections

Father Nicolas Schwizer

74 – January 01, 2010

God's Epiphany through Us

Epiphany is the feast of God's apparition, of God's manifestation. Essential to Christianity is that God reveals himself to mankind....that God comes to us.... that God is made known to us in a palpable way.

The Bible speaks to us about God's revelations and manifestations. Already from the earliest times, He approaches mankind. But, after having manifested himself many times and in many ways, God appears to us in his Son.

This is the great event: God becomes a child. He becomes a child like all other children, a child who cries when he is hungry and whose diaper must be changed. Nevertheless, behind his weakness and helplessness, He hides and contains the great infinite God. That is Epiphany: the manifestation, the revelation of God in a newborn child.

The Magi who come from afar to see the child, underline the fact that God has appeared for the entire world. They represent the men of good will who seek happiness and salvation. Thus, they arrive at the manger and understand that all the greatness and all the love of God for mankind is in that child. They are filled with great joy, they adore Him and they offer Him gifts: gold, incense and myrrh.

But, what does this event mean to us? Is it more than a simple remembrance of that happy time?

This occurred centuries ago, but perhaps today, it is more real than ever. Consciously or unconsciously, God's Epiphany is what mankind seeks. There is a greater hunger for God today because mankind, in spite of all its conquests – or perhaps precisely because of them – feels more empty, more in need of help.

Also today, mankind wants to see God. If that Child of Bethlehem is God, if He resurrected and thus definitely demonstrated his divinity – where is He? The phrase of the Magi is repeated today by thousands of anxious men and women: where is God?

Epiphany today should occur not only in one place, but in all corners of the world. Where there is one Christian, wherever the Church is alive, that is where the Epiphany of Christ, of God, should take place. God no longer becomes flesh in only one person but in the entire Christian community. God becomes flesh in each one of us.

If it cannot be seen in our lives, could it be that we do not show it? If his love, his generosity, his understanding and his forgiveness cannot be found, could it not be because we are far away from the Gospel, from God, from his Spirit?

Today there are thousands or millions of Magi who, from afar or nearby, come toward the Church and toward Christians – seeking the one who came to be the salvation of the world. They are at the doors of our homes and our temples waiting to see Christ pass by. But if we continue showing his mask and not his true face, how can they recognize Him?

There is nothing which can free us from that responsibility. Today, it is the way chosen by God for his Epiphany, his manifestation. God must be discovered by reading the story of our life. Who sees me, should discover Him. Whoever joins us, should meet up with Him.

Dear brothers and sisters, each Eucharist is God's Epiphany. May it be for us an invitation and a motivation to manifest Christ to all who meet us, to all those who seek Him in us, in our lives, in our families, in our communities.

Questions for reflection

1. Are we an Epiphany for others?
2. What do they see in us and what do they find in us?
3. Do we think of the Eucharist as God's Epiphany?

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