

**OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA WEYMOUTH**  
**HOMILY FOR THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY (B)**  
**8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2012**

Epiphany means revelation and today, the baby born at Christmas is revealed, that means shown as the long awaited King of the Jews. But more than this, He is to be King for all of the world.

Isaiah speaks in glorious terms how the light has come. All will come to this light, who is Jesus, and this light will shine over the whole world.

In the psalm we sang “Lord, every nation on Earth will adore you”.  
Then, in our second reading St Paul makes it very clear that this light is for everyone.

He says, “It has now been revealed that the Gentiles are co-heirs, co-partners...”

So let’s translate this to today, Jesus is for everyone, not just Jews or Christians. If we consider the awesomeness of this event, how on Earth can we keep Jesus to ourselves?

As a simple example, let’s say you or a good friend have been trying for a baby for years and wonderful news, you are blessed with one. Then, even more, you know in your heart this child will do amazing things. This child of yours has the ability to change the world. Wouldn’t we all want to tell as many people as we can?

What huge news we have, God himself has come down to us and shown himself as a baby, Jesus is the visible image of the unseen God. Revealed for all. (And for us 2000 years later he is also present physically every time we celebrate Mass.)

So why don’t we tell everyone about Jesus? Our culture has instilled in many of us a feeling that it is either not right, or not necessary, to talk about our God. At work or school or with neighbours or friends we often avoid conversation about God. Maybe we also need a new revelation – in our hearts. Nothing intellectual but a revelation in our hearts.

At every Mass at the moment of the epiclesis, this is when Father invokes the Holy Spirit and you may observe him using this hand action, our gifts of bread and wine become Jesus really and fully present.

We cannot understand this, the truth that Jesus is fully present has to be revealed then we can believe it.

(Some of us may try to intellectualise it (this was one of my biggest challenges during training for the diaconate), others want to believe it but can't quite, it's so hard. Let's pray that God will reveal to us the truth that Jesus is fully present, that we may know this as we approach the altar during communion.)

Let's now turn to the Gospel.

The Jews had knowledge of Scripture yet many of them did not recognise Jesus as their Saviour or King. There are so many of our friends or relatives in the same position. They have knowledge, but not recognition. Let's be open to starting a conversation with them. Sister Nancy Keller suggests this – strike up a conversation, tell a story, and offer an invitation. Invite them to Mass. Don't worry about what they may think, ask the Holy Spirit to prepare the way.

I mentioned that even with the benefit of Scripture not everyone recognised Jesus as King. It's a cause to reflect that the Magi using their knowledge of nature and astronomy (God given gifts) did recognise Jesus was a king. They followed the star, and it led them to something amazing. It doesn't benefit us to analyse what type of star, the importance is it was leading to Jesus. The revelation was so important that these kings offered gold, frankincense and myrrh to a little child in a stable. Can you imagine that situation today, rich leaders offering honour to the poor?

Note how after meeting Jesus they were still guided by God, as in a dream they told to go home another way. By doing so they avoided the evil that Herod had planned. We too are guided by God. And like the Magi we too are asked to place our gifts before Jesus, we can bring our talents as offerings to Him when we approach the altar.

What is the single greatest gift we can give anyone? So many people suffer from lack of hope. Our world can be uncertain; it is often unfair, harsh and dispiriting. Yet we have the certainty of Christian hope. This is not a vague desire for things or possessions or comfort, but a solid knowledge that Jesus has come and that because of this all will be well. Maybe not right here and now, but it will be well. This hope gives us courage and comfort. We are only passing through this world so whilst we must do our best, living in the situations of our own lives, our final hope lies in the knowledge of our place in heaven.

We have to share this message of hope and love. It can literally save people from despair and show them how to live.

Just as God revealed himself to all nations all those years ago, I pray that God will reveal himself more clearly to all of us here today. I pray that as this happens we in turn will reveal God to others.

You may be wondering what is under this cloth. I shall reveal it to you! What or who do you see? Perhaps more importantly what does HE see? A few weeks ago I asked whether we see Jesus in the person next to us, or our friends or family. I am looking at the back of this and struggle to see Jesus from my view, but that is because I need a continuing revelation of who and where Jesus is. Let me show you.

Jesus is in every one of us, and we grow closer to him through our love for each other and by coming together as community as we have today.

To slightly adapt an old phrase, we may be the only person this man sees who has the chance to show him Jesus. Will we do this for him? He is revealed to us, will we share this supreme gift?

Maybe, this week, we can all think of just one person whom we would like to know Jesus. Pray to the Holy Spirit to open that person's heart and pray for an opportunity to strike up a conversation, tell a story, and offer an invitation.

**Rev Jonathan de Kretser**