

PEDRO ARRUIPE INSTITUTE, RAIA - GOA

REFLECTIONS ON THE SUNDAY LITURGY

03rd January 2021 – The Epiphany of the Lord

IS 60: 1-6 | EPH 3: 2-3, 5-6 | MT 2: 1-12

Scriptural Track: Fr. Raul D'Souza SJ

The magi in the ancient times were astrologers and were much respected of the lot. Their search for a king must have truly given rise to serious enquiry into this belief of the Jews. Hence, Herod seeks to find out what the scriptures says in order to get rid of any other who would pose a threat to his seat of power. Herod was a very suspicious man and as he got older he was consumed by the fear of his power slipping out of his hand and he murdered all whom he suspected of having eyed his throne. He did not even spare his wife and children.

On one hand we see a king who is afraid of losing a grip on power and on the other hand we see that there is another king who is proclaimed a king only by few, viz. the shepherds and now the magi. This king is born in a stable and above all he is just a baby. Yet there is a fear that even he could overthrow Herod. John Dahlberg-Acton's famous saying comes to light in the case of Herod. "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

The magi saw something beyond the corrupt power that was held firmly by Herod. They saw the power of humility and simplicity. Their gifts were perfect, they suited the occasion, they were a fitting tribute to a King. Gold, frankincense and myrrh. Now there are many symbolic meanings that have been added to the gift by the fathers of the Church and subsequently many other authors. Let us look at these to find what gift I can offer to Christ.

Gold: A precious metal that is found in its pure form and is purified by fire. This metal has always been prized for its lustre and shine that is long lasting. It speaks of the character of the person. We are all gifted with talents. Some are good at public relations, some at study, some at sports and others at research etc. How can you shine in your ability to make a difference? A famous theologian once said that we must be the presence of Christ to another. Let your personality become a gift to Christ by doing your best in whatever thing you are gifted in.

Frankincense: was offered only by the high priest in the temple. It signifies the holiness and sanctity. We are told in the 1st letter to the Corinthians 6:19 that we are a temple of the Holy Spirit. We must treat life with respect. We talk of dignity that every person has, irrespective of creed, colour or caste. You could brighten someone's day just by a kind word or appreciation, or even with a smile. You will find the joy that it brings to yourself.

Myrrh: was an ointment that was used for the dead. It was used by the Jews to fasten the degeneration of the body. It reminds us of the shortness of our existence. We are just pilgrims on in this world. What awaits is a the heavenly Jerusalem. We can life this life in a total oblivion or we could take responsibility and make the world a little more joyful.

Therefore, Gold- to be a shining personality in your own way

Frankincense to give due dignity to life and

Myrrh: to reminder of our shortness of life as pilgrims here on earth.