

FATHER MARK SCHULTE
HOMILY
EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
JANUARY 4, 2026

“We Are Light”

The word Epiphany means to make manifest or to make an appearance of a Divine Being. In today’s case, it is the appearance to the world of the Divine Messiah, Jesus Christ in the flesh (Catechism of the Catholic Church par. 528). This event has been in the making for four thousand years, ever since the sin of Adam. God promised that He would send a Savior, a Messiah (Micah 5:12).

In the Old Testament God revealed Himself through His powerful acts, through powerful earthquakes, floods, and burning bush, but never in His flesh. Today God reveals Himself to the Gentiles of the world, as the Word made flesh, a small child, to the travelers who have come from distant lands, guided by God through celestial bodies and sacred writings (Mt 2:1-12).

The small child in the flesh lying in the manger is God the Father’s only Son, the Word who willingly came in the flesh to offer His life for all those who would come to believe in Him.

God promised to save all people of the world, not just the Jews. The Jews however are that special chosen people through whom God would make Himself initially known to the world. He comes in the line of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, and then finally through Joseph and Mary who were descendants of David.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Mary has given birth to her child, sheltering Him in a cave for the world to see. Guided by God the foreign wise men have found their way to this remote place. By the power of the Holy Spirit the Magi recognized Him as an important figure, a Messiah, as is indicated by the gifts that they gave to Him, gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Gold for a King, Frankincense for a Priest and Myrrh for a royal death.

From this place in the wilderness, the Messiah would begin His mission to the rest of the world. First to Egypt, then back to Nazareth and Jerusalem. From Mt. Calvary in Jerusalem, He would send His twelve disciples to the rest of the world, to bring the good news that the man-God has now made eternal salvation available to all people.

The Catholic Church that Jesus established through His apostles will play a major role in this plan. But not only the institutional Church but also every person who by Baptism is in that Church. Through the light of charity we are to be the light drawing all people to His Church. We who are sitting here today in these pews, are the end product of this feast day. The Church is made manifest to the world through us. We become the great Epiphany to the rest of the world. The world sees Jesus through us. We are told that they will know we are Christians by our love, through the light of our charity.