

A Word From Fr. Tom Niehaus

January 5, 2020



Epiphany Graces

“Lord, every nation on earth will adore you (Psalm 72).” Every man, woman and child was created to praise, adore, honor and worship the Lord. Life is a gift and our mission is to live for the Lord. This weekend is the celebration of the Epiphany of the Lord and we are reminded of these truths related to each person’s response to God, whether we are Christians or not. The young & the old as well as the educated & ignorant and the rich & the poor are to seek out the truth of their existence by following the Light-Jesus Christ. It is Jesus who illuminates the path through the darkness of this world’s selfishness, confusion and sadness. “Nations shall walk by your light, and kings by your shining radiance (Isaiah 60:3).” As the diverse peoples of the world walk along the pathways of this world’s vast terrain, may they do so with open eyes, minds and hearts that the Holy Spirit may reveal to them the power of Divine Love. The pilgrimage of the Magi offers an example of hope for all of us on this path of faith. We see their openness to the mystery of faith. With open eyes the Magi followed the light of the star from their country in the East. They studied with open minds calculations made from combining astronomical science and faith leading them to conclude, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage (Matthew 2:2).” Drawing close to the Christ-child in the manger the Magi, opened their hearts and offered to him their love and adoration leaving evidence of this through the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. During this Christmas Season we are encouraged to open our eyes, minds and hearts to the mystery of the Lord’s love. How do we see the light of Christ at work in our lives? How do we still need to grow in our understanding of the Lord’s great love for his people? Does the Lord come first in our lives and receive the treasures of our heart’s desires? Take some time this Epiphany Sunday to adore the Lord Jesus Christ and give him thanks.

Welcoming the Immigrant

The Catholic Church in the United States takes time during Epiphany Sunday to pray for our brothers and sisters who as immigrants live in our midst. The scriptures state that, “Do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the alien or the poor; do not plot evil against one another in your hearts (Zechariah 7:10).” As Catholics we are to have a special concern for all people including those who are here in the United States of America from other countries. We know from heritage that there are many people in the St. Patrick, Most Holy Redeemer and St. Canice area that came as immigrants from Czech and Irish lineages.

“Today in Minnesota the largest immigrant populations include: Mexico 70,000, Somalia 31,000, India 30,000, Laos /Hmong 23,000, Vietnam 20,000, China 20,000, Ethiopia 19,000 and Thailand/Hmong 17,000 (www.mncompass.org/immigration/overview).” Remembering that many of our families were immigrants to this country we take time to support these vulnerable people through prayer and welcome.

Spiritual Direction

From the evening of January 5th to the morning of January 11th I will be helping with a retreat for seminarians as a spiritual director. I have been helping with this silent retreat for the seminarians of the Kenrick-Glennon Seminary out of St. Louis since 2013. It is always a gift to serve in this capacity and help others grow in the spiritual life. Please pray for the men on retreat as well as those of us who will be leading this special time of prayer and reflection.

Christmas Blessings!

Fr. Tom Niehaus