

Fr. Romeo Evangelista's Homily
January 5, 2020
The Epiphany of the Lord (A)

How can something that is so good ever end? A good vacation, a lively party, a memorable gathering, we always wish it can be prolonged or repeated many, many times over. Today's feast ushers in the last week of the Christmas season. But will the Christmas spirit really end with the Christmas season?

The Lord is telling us that Christmas – its spirit, message, and challenge persist. As we celebrate the journey of the Magi and their encounter with the Christ Child, we see that Christmas is just the start of following Jesus. The Magi walked towards the Lord and from the Lord walked back to their previous situations with a renewed strength and confidence. Rightly then, we can say that they ushered in the first Christmas experience of pilgrimage.

Some of us have really embarked on an actual pilgrimage to a famous religious site. How many of you here have been to a pilgrimage? I'm sure it was a good experience for all of you. But the most important pilgrimage, the deepest one, for sure, is the one undertaken by the heart.

Each of us, consciously or not, goes through life searching for something that will give us meaning, joy or fulfillment. Life is not static but dynamic as we go through experiences, relationships, and lessons in life. For the Christian, the goal is clear. We walk towards a closer relationship with God. This is the meaning of life. This is the soul of our journey.

In what does our pilgrimage consist? Like the Magi, our pilgrimage of the heart involves two basic things: faith and gifts. The Magi journeyed in faith. The Magi certainly left behind very precious things as they decided to travel – comforts, families, and possessions. They also faced many uncertainties ahead – dangers, sickness, and troubles along the way. But because of faith, they were open to all possibilities that God prepared for them. In our own life, when we embrace faith, we also offer to the Lord many things. There are fears and anxieties, difficulties of all sorts. But we are inspired by the presence of the Star pointing to Jesus, assuring us that God is present with us even as we travel through life. It is this kind of faith that gives me strength and keeps me in my ministry.

The Magi also journeyed with gifts. They did not leave home empty-handed. They knew they had something to share with God and with other people. Like them, we realize that in life, we are also capable of sharing gifts. And life becomes more meaningful when we begin to share our gifts to Jesus through other people. Let us discover our gifts, celebrate them, and share them. When we do so, we find that we receive more than we have given.

As we leave behind the Christmas season, let us pray that our journey to Jesus will not end. May our daily lives be filled with faith in God and in ourselves. May we continue sharing our gifts with those around us, especially the needy. In this way we will receive more than we have given, more than we expected from the God who is forever with us in our pilgrimage of life.