

Gospel Verse
Sunday, January 4, 2009
Isaiah
(8:30 AM Mass)

Caravans of Camels shall fill you, dromedaries from Midian and Ephah; all from Sheba shall come bearing Gold and frankincense, and proclaiming the Praises of the Lord.

Isaiah 60:6

Today is a day so special that it is considered, in the Eastern Church, second only to the Feast of the Resurrection, the Feast of Easter. It is the Feast of Epiphany. Epiphany is a Greek word that simply means 'Ah-ha!' Ah-ha, son of a gun, I could have had a V-8!!! It's all of a sudden you're looking and looking and looking — I get it! I see it!

And today we have the wizards of 'ah-ha' that which is hidden in plain sight. We sing and we're going to sing later on We Three Kings and we call this the Feast of the Kings or the Feast of the Wise men. And the reason we call them kings is because we know what to do with a king. You put them on a throne. You give them a little gold. And he's in charge. That's the reason that Herod was so very upset. Very upset today because he's the one who's sitting on the throne. What do you mean, 'this king of the Jews?'

And yet we have these three strange people coming to the East. Of course, mystery always comes from the East. So, from the east we have these three strange figures that we call astrologers, stargazers. They are watching the universe and seeing the stars in the heavens. And they want to be attached to the stars because there's a cosmic connection of all the world. And they see this star brightly shining and they follow it. They follow this star. Because to be unconnected from the asteroid, from the asters, is to be a dis-aster. That's where our word 'disaster' comes from. To be unconnected to the stars. To be unconnected to the universe. They want to be connected to what? The greatest reality of the world. So they are drawn. But they are astrologers. They are wise men. But, most of all, they are magi — magicians.

We don't really understand the role of the magicians. The magicians are one of the four great archetypes that everybody has. There is the king archetype, the lover, the warrior and then the magician. We make a terrible mistake because we think that magicians are only to do magic — to hide reality. It's called illusions. David Copperfield is a master of illusion. That's not the role of a real magician.

The role of a real magician isn't to hide reality, it's to unveil reality. The kind of magic that we're used to is nothing on this side, nothing on this side... Illusion — to make me think that something is real when it's not. And the greatest sin in modern world, in all the world that 'we live in illusions'.

This is the year when we are literally coming down with a huge trunk of illusions. We were in control of the universe. And it was always upward and onward. Anything we wanted we could get. Tremendous illusions. prestidigitation — the magic of the market — all kinds of crazy things that we believe in. They are illusions.

But, a real magician, somebody who is able to see all the way through sees beyond the surface to what is really there and that is the Magi. Because who are they coming to? They are coming to a little child. A poor and helpless child. The most vulnerable. They are bowing before Him. Why? They see all the way through! And they see the great reality. And the greatest realities, the things that really count in life are always invisible to the eye. Love is invisible to the eye. Mercy is invisible to the eye, grace is invisible to the eye, compassion is invisible to the eye. What really counts in life? Those are the things that count.

So the magicians come today to unveil to us the reality that the Earth knows and the heaven knows, and the sea knows but we don't. So they are trying to teach us to see all the way through. They come up to us today and say, 'Look — nothing on this side. Nothing on this side. And yet I will take a simple piece of bread and I'm going to say the words of consecration over it and from all outward appearances it's a piece of bread. And I'm going to ask you a question. A question of the Magi — Do you see? Do you see? Can you see written behind the appearances of bread what is really really there? And, you're going to answer me, I see! You're going to say, Amen, I see.'

Now the reason that is so very important, the reason we are coming today to reveal the things that are hidden in plain sight and the things that are always are always counting are always hidden in plain sight. The reason that is so very very important is because if we can see it there, there is a possibility that we can see it in the most difficult place of all. The place where reality and mercy and divinity is most heightened — here and here and here and here. When we learn to see the divinity there, when we learn to see God not only in all creation but in all of God's wonderful humanity well then we've seen all the way through. That the darkness that has enveloped the world is no more. The war is over and famine is finished. And at that point the great mystery has been revealed. The mystery of God in us.