

Homily for the Second Sunday after Christmas 2021

The Homily comes from Fr Mmbofheni Phasha of Holy Trinity, Mamelodi.

[Please pray for Fr Mmbofheni and all his family. His daughter has tested positive for Covid-19 and he and the rest of the family are now in quarantine...]

Cleanse my heart and my lips, Almighty God, that I may worthily proclaim your holy Gospel. In the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen

The Word that became flesh.

In the book of Genesis we learn that everything became into being because of the Word. This Word is the God that controls the order of all things. The Word is the Almighty who is complete within Himself. He does not need anything, He is content in his 'Godness' (God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit). The Word is the Creator and becomes the created. Here is evidence of the humility of God that comes from His love for us. The Word (Creator) becomes flesh (the creature).

In His Wisdom God created us; human beings who depend on his love. He breathed His life into us. As human beings, we are not complete, as we still get sick and die. We are not certain about our future, and our human condition (sin) has brought us rejection and pain.

If you are a God who is content in Himself, surely you would not "wish" to be human! Humans are limited and fully dependent on the God; but God in His love for us, became flesh...

Like all humans, He was born in time and people saw him with their eyes. As a human being He experienced life as we know it. The Church is facing uncertainty in the midst of Corona Virus. As I am preparing this, the President of South Africa has just banned all social gathering including church services until mid-January. We are aware that people are no longer attending church services as before because of Covid-19. The church service as we know it might change after the Covid-19 pandemic. This is a cause for distress to all of us. We have lost people to Covid-19. Some of us are sick.... Jesus the Word that became flesh also experienced uncertainty in His life. "Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." Mat 26: 39 (NIV) Jesus knew that he was going to face death. (v38) and yet Jesus showed us how to act in the face of uncertainty and despair. We are to fall to the ground and pray. Falling to the ground means acknowledging our human condition - to accept that we are limited and helpless. Let us allow God to take control. Now is the time when we should allow the will of God to be realized in our lives.

We are all afraid of Covid-19; the country is in pain because of it. Our friends and brothers in the church have died and others have been sick. We feel forsaken AND alone in this pain. The loss and pain we are going through can only make sense to a God who became fully human, and the truth is that Jesus suffers with us. Do you remember when Jesus was on the Cross, He too felt forsaken and cried "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" (which means "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"). Matt 27:46. We will do well if we remember that in our times of pain and trouble we should also cry to God. This is the Jesus who "was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor" As He became flesh, He also crowned our humanity in glory. You see, God understands our situation precisely because he has been through it himself. If being a human being was a bad thing, now we can be proud of being human because of "the Word that became flesh."

Jesus was indeed a true human being who even attended weddings. He had friends who made life meaningful, and enemies who betrayed him. We can accept our human limitation and live a meaningful life through the God who loves us so much that he became human for our sake. The Bible tells us that "for we do not have a high priest who is unable sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin." Heb 4 :14. This verse tells us the meaning of "the Word became flesh"

Our human life makes sense only because the Word became flesh. Our pain and joys draw meaning in the entirety of the ‘Christ event’ (His birth, death and resurrection). The Word redeemed flesh by being born as a human being.

The Word becoming flesh is a mystery that we need to cherish in our lives as priests. This mystery teaches us to be humble for the sake of the love we have for God’s own people.

Remember what we say as priests as we pour water into the chalice, *“By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity.”*

God is willing to share his divinity with us, and that is why He came to be a human and lived among us. Our humanity is crowned through the ‘Christ event’ and now we are made sons and daughters of our God. Whatever we are going through, we take comfort in the fact that, Jesus Christ is always with us, has lived as we live, and has shown us the path for our lives.

With our knowledge of the wonder that the Word became flesh, we are able to approach 2021 with a new sense of confidence, knowing that whatever we face, our God is always with us.

My family and I wish you all the best of 2021. 2021 will be better than 2020 and our lives will soon be back to normal again. May God bless you in the New Year.

+ *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*

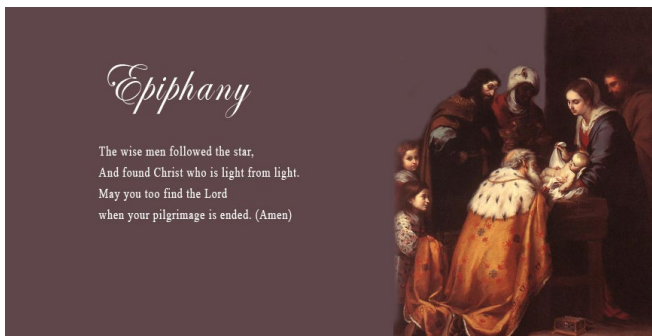


And the Word became flesh, and dwelt amongst us....

January 6th

The Feast of the Epiphany

*Epiphany, also called **Feast of the Epiphany, Theophany, or Three Kings' Day**, (from Greek epiphaneia, “manifestation”), is a Christian holiday commemorating the first manifestation of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi, and the manifestation of his divinity, as it occurred at his baptism in the Jordan River and at his first miracle, at Cana in Galilee. Epiphany is one of the three principal and oldest festival days of the Christian church (the other two are Easter and Christmas). Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, and other Western churches observe the feast on January 6*



Epiphany

[ih-pif-uh-nee]SHOW IPA

/ ɪˈpɪf ə ni /PHONETIC RESPELLING

noun, plural e·piph·a·nies.

(initial capital letter) a Christian festival, observed on January 6, commemorating the manifestation of Christ to the gentiles in the persons of the Magi; Twelfth-day of Christmas.

- an appearance or manifestation, especially of a deity.
- a sudden, intuitive perception of or insight into the reality or essential meaning of something, usually initiated by some simple, homely, or commonplace occurrence or experience.
- a literary work or section of a work presenting, usually symbolically, such a moment of revelation and insight.

What will be your ‘epiphany’ in 2021 are you ready for God to reveal His purpose for your life?