

January 7, 2007
Feast of the Epiphany
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Good morning! Today is the Epiphany, or Three Kings, or the Magi, or however you are going to say it. But as we sit there and reflect on it – they tell us how we are called to live – these Three Kings, and it starts by God’s imitation. Here God gives us the gift of His only Son – He has nothing else to give. And yet these three Magi see this gift and they respond by bringing gifts. And so, what needs to happen is it needs to be the same with us – we need to be people that respond to the God of the Universe by bringing Him gifts – by bringing Him something for what He has done for us. And again, I don’t know if you know people that are always “gimmee, gimmee” people. Do you have friends like that? That they are always saying “hey, can you do this for me, hey can you do that for me...hey, I need this, I need that...” and every time you see them, you know they are going to ask you to do something! So, what do you learn to do? Run the other way! When they call you, you praise God every day that you have that caller ID so you can say “hey, its them, oh, I’m not home...” You know what those type friends are like, and everybody has them in their life! And there are all of us who have people in our life and we go “oh...” I call them the “black hole” people. It’s always “gimmee, gimmee,” and give nothing back – its just “gimmee, gimmee, gimmee.” They are this black whole that just keeps taking and taking and taking. And we run away from those people! And yet, so often we are this type people with God. “Gimmee, Gimmee, Gimmee...I want, I want...do this, do this...oh, please bless me, oh, help me not to have cancer, or help me to be healthy, oh God, help me to get this job, give me peace...” But the big difference, of course is God doesn’t run the other way. He stays with us. But still, the kings are here to tell us that we are not just to be the “gimmee, gimmee, gimmee” people before the God of the Universe. We have to give back to Him. And the three things the kings teach us today, are the three things we need to give. The first thing is they prostrated themselves and they did Him homage. We have to give God honor, homage and worship. The second thing they did was they took time for God. They left their homeland, they left everything, they put everything on hold just to be in this relationship with God. Everything else was secondary. So, the second thing they gave God was their time. The third thing they gave God – and they teach us – was they gave God their treasure. So the three things we need to focus on this day of the Epiphany is to give God homage, to give God time, and to give God our treasures, huh? Let’s focus on the first. To give God homage means that we thank God for who He is - not just for what He does for us. The best example of that would be Job – the Lord has given – the Lord has taken away – blessed be the name of the Lord. So, we don’t just sit there and thank God when things are going great – but we thank God when things aren’t going great, because He deserves it! He still gave us existence, He still takes care of us – He’s promised us eternal life – He’s promised us that we are going to live forever – He’s promised to die for our sins – He’s promised to take care of us! So no matter what – when we praise God – when we give Him homage – we are making an act of trust that you who are God will take care of me, even though the situation doesn’t look right.

I will praise you – I will honor you – I will glorify you. And when we get to do this it comes to the Book of Revelation – which is in our Adoration Chapel – which I talk about all the time – Chapter 4 of Revelation where it says “they cry out – night and day – without pause – they sing holy, holy, holy is the Lord, God almighty, holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, almighty, who is, who was and who is to come...” and every time they cry out the people fall down, they take their crowns and they throw them before the throne and they worship Him. And so, every time we come before God and we do Him homage, we get to enter into the kingdom of heaven while we are still on earth. And so, that is the key! Instead of being “gimmee” people – you see when we are only “gimmee” people we are only focused on earth – and we stay on earth. We focus on “are my needs being taken care of now – is everything ok now” and we stay here! But when we start praising God we leave here, and enter into the kingdom. So, it is totally up to you, where you want to be - your call. First thing is to give Him homage. The second thing is to give Him time. You know, when we started the Adoration Chapel, however long ago – I guess about three years ago – and we put the posters together, and everybody had their idea on what should be on the poster. You know, like the gentle imitation “please come to Jesus...” And I said “no!” It is “Is God worth your time?” Why? Because that is the questions and they said that really isn’t the question and they said “oh, you’re so strong about that” and I said “yes I am.” Because it comes down to God was worth the time of the Magi, God was worth everything else! They put everything aside – they left their particular countries and they put everything aside to be with God. How about you and me? Is God worth our time? And you know some people say “oh, Father, you don’t get it! I am very busy!” Oh, I know! Who do you give more time to, though? God or TV, hmm? If you are so busy, so, so, busy, what gets more of your time per week – God or television? And if you have time for television, don’t you ever tell me that you don’t have time for God. Don’t you ever say that you are too busy – because you are not! You just have your priorities a little screwed up! Don’t you hate that? You just have screwed up priorities, huh? You know, in this church of 850 families – we have 22 openings in the Adoration Chapel for this week – I almost had a heart attach the other day when Dominic told me. I said “do you mean to tell me that in our church of 850 families, we can’t fill that – we have 22 openings?” And again, I don’t buy that people can’t do it – of course you can do it! Of course, you can give God that hour a week – you can do it in the middle of the night – you can do it in the morning...24 hours a day – seven days a week. If you can get an hour of TV in a week, I am sure you can get an hour of Adoration in. And of course, we always can’t do this – but in two weeks I won’t be here, and then people sign up and take my place. So, if you can’t be there every week, say you need a substitute and people will help you. But is God worth your time? He is going to mess up your priorities for a moment – you are going to have to leave doing something – might be sleep – to go to be with Him. The Magi left everything to go to be with Him. Will you give Him your time? Is He worth your time? And not just about the time you spend at Mass on Sunday. “Well I go to Mass on Sunday, don’t I?” A lot of people go to Mass on Sunday for one reason – not anyone here – but there are people like that – so that they don’t go to hell! “Because if I miss Mass on Sunday, it is a mortal sin and if I die in mortal sin, I will go to hell...” Then you go to Mass for what reason? For you!

Why don't you come and give Him an hour a week for Him? I know you hate me – for more than the yelling, I know! The first thing we have to give God is our homage, the second thing we have to give God is our time and the third thing we have to give God is our treasures. When they came, they didn't come empty handed to God! And so, when we come to God, we cannot come empty handed. He has given all of us something! And that is where we come to give back! They came and gave Him their time and homage, but they also brought their treasure. They said “here is our treasure, God.” And again, as I have talked about before, we need to make sure that we bring our treasure before Jesus. And that is what we have, huh? Our money and our different things – we bring it and we lay it at His feet. And so, the question is – what do you do with your treasure? Are you a person who tithes – not so much to the church, but to God? Do you give God your 10% off the top? Is He worth your treasure, or is the treasure yours? “It's my treasure, God gave it to me, I worked for it...” – good – keep it! God doesn't need it – but you do! When you give God your treasure – He blesses you abundantly! You see, we can never out-give God – that is the point! Of all the three things we talked about – when we sit there and do this, we always get more! Always! That's the point! We don't do it so we get more – we do it so we can worship Him, so we can give Him our time, and we can give Him our treasure, and God says “listen, when you honor Me, I will bless you.” It's that simple! “When you honor Me – I will bless you.” And so, are you blessed in your life? And if you are saying “I'm really not blessed...” well then think about it. Do you give God homage – do you give Him your time – and do you give Him your treasure? If you want blessed, you have to give Him your homage, you have to give Him your time and you have to give Him your treasure. And stop thinking you are unworthy to be with Him, or that you are a hypocrite – I am the biggest hypocrite in this church – everybody knows it! Especially after last night! But we still have to try – we have to get up and try. This day for the Three Wise Men – is He worth your homage – is He worth your time – is He worth your treasure? May each of you know His love today and forever. Amen.