



**Called according To
HIS Purpose!**

TASTE Reflection Questions #13
2017-2018
Joy in the Advent Season
Fr. Larry Swink



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“Not my will but yours be done.” Lk 22:42

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1. What was the element of Fr. Larry’s talk that most caught your attention? How did you find or create joy this Advent Season?

Read the article on the Epiphany on the back

2. Elsewhere in the author states, *“Epiphany lifts our eyes from the family-centered celebrations (at Christmas) and demands that we should include in our vision ‘all the ends of the earth.’ It demands that, (a)like the three wise men, we should have the courage to follow the light of the star we have seen, however hazardous the journey; (b) that the light of our faith, like that of the wise men, should be so strong that we are able to see and recognize our Lord in whatever unexpected a way He may present Himself to us and (c)that having recognized Him, we should bow down and adore Him, offering Him our total loyalty.”*

Over this Christmas season, in what ways have you needed courage to follow Jesus? In what unexpected ways did you encounter Jesus? In what ways did you adore Jesus?

3. The author further states, *“Epiphany demands that like these kings we should return to our own countries a different way, carrying to all those we meet the light of Christ. We have the responsibility to radiate that light in the darkness of our own world.*

In what ways do you “radiate the light of Christ” in your circles of influence? In prayer did the Lord reveal to you any new desires to be a light in a dark world?



For many years in the English speaking world the feast of Epiphany has been overshadowed by that of Christmas. But unless we realize the significance of this great day, we see only one side of the mystery of the Incarnation. Now after contemplating the staggering fact that God has become a human child, we turn to look at this mystery from another angle and realize that this seemingly helpless Child is, in fact, the omnipotent God, the King and Ruler of the universe. The feast of Christ's divinity completes the feast of His humanity. It fulfills all our Advent longing for the King "who is come with great power and majesty." We see that whereas Christmas is the family feast of Christianity, Epiphany is the great "world feast of the Catholic Church."

Divine manifestation: The Epiphany takes its name from the Greek *epiphania*, which denotes the visit of a god to earth. The first idea of the feast is the manifestation of Christ as the Son of God. "Begotten before the daystar and before all ages, the Lord our Savior is this day made manifest to the world." The feast unites three events in the life of Christ when His divinity, as it were, shines through His humanity: (1) the adoration of the Magi; (2) the baptism of Christ in the Jordan; and (3) the first miracle at the wedding feast of Cana.

Royal kingship: A second important idea in Epiphany is the extension of Christ's kingship to the whole world. The revelation of Christ to the three kings at Bethlehem is a symbol of His revelation to the whole of the Gentile world. Epiphany presents to us the calling of not merely a chosen few, but all nations to Christianity.

Your Light is Come: Closely linked to both these themes of divine manifestation and world kingship is a third idea running through the Epiphany feast: that of light. During Advent, the world was in darkness, and we prayed and waited in the spirit of the Jewish nation which, over thousands of years, prayed and waited in expectation of the Coming Light. At Christmas the Light shone forth, but dimly, seen only by a few around the crib: Mary and Joseph and the shepherds. But at Epiphany the Light bursts forth to all nations and the prophecy is fulfilled: "The Gentiles shall walk in Thy light, and kings in the brightness of Thy rising."

The royal nuptials: Besides the important ideas outlined above, there is still another great theme threaded through the Epiphany feast—the theme of the royal nuptials, the wedding of Christ with humanity. It is an idea on a completely different level from the historical events which the Epiphany celebrates, yet inextricably bound up with them; for example, the historical marriage feast of Cana is used by the Church to suggest the setting for Christ's nuptials with the Church; the wise men represent not only the three Persian Magi adoring the Babe 2000 years ago at Bethlehem, but also the Gentile world hurrying to the wedding feast at the end of time when mankind's nuptials with the divine Bridegroom will be celebrated; the gold, frankincense and myrrh are not only tokens for the little Baby King in the stable, but royal wedding gifts for the mystical marriage feast of heaven.