# THE THREE KINGS AND OUR SPIRITUAL INDIFFERENCE

Bp. Michał Stobnicki

Beloved in Christ the Lord! Today we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany, a feast which in the liturgical calendar stands higher than Christmas, something we often forget. One of the oldest and greatest feasts of the Catholic Church, on a par with the feast of the Resurrection of the Lord and the Descent of the Holy Spirit.

My dear ones, on this day, 6 January 2023, the announcement was foretold of the first of the bishops consecrated to ensure the survival of the Holy Mass, of the Catholic sacraments, of the continuation of the fight for the faith undertaken by Archbishop Marcel. Today it is made public that Fr. Giacomo Ballini has already been consecrated, an Italian who has worked for many years in Ireland and ministers there. I therefore ask you to surround the bishop with your prayers. Should fate throw you onto the Emerald Isle, you should know that there is also a bishop there on the spot, cooperating, I believe, with six priests at present and ministering in Ireland.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Beloved in Christ the Lord! Today's Gospel shows us the Magi, who come to Bethlehem to pay homage to the divine Child, the Word made flesh, the Lord of heaven and earth, who reveals Himself today, on this Feast of the Epiphany, to the whole world, to all men. Which is what the Introit of today's Holy Mass expresses: "Behold, the Lord the Ruler is come: and the kingdom is in His hand, and power, and dominion."

We do not know what the beginning of their journey looked like, my dear ones, but they were undoubtedly well-educated men, men of means, men who enjoyed universal respect in the communities in which they lived. But they were not satisfied with their social position, with their wealth. They sought something more, they sought an answer to the fundamental question of what the meaning of our human life is. And when one day they saw a mysterious star in the sky, whose brightness intrigued them, they began to study their books, the old prophecies, until the moment came that was decisive in their lives, the moment in which they took leave of their loved ones and set out on a long journey through unknown lands, a journey that was to bring them to the true God, to the Saviour of the world. They longed to find the truth, they longed to know the true God, to pay Him homage, to find answers to the questions that tormented them about the meaning and purpose of our human life.

And how great a courage it took to read in this sign, the star that appeared in the sky and that had been foretold by the prophets, God's call to set out on a dangerous and arduous journey toward what is so distant and uncertain, toward the mysterious God who became man. And we can only imagine what the reaction of those around them was, how their nearest and dearest reacted when they announced to them this seemingly mad decision. How much mockery the Magi's decision must have provoked from people who were so content with their comfortable and peaceful life in the shadow of the figures of pagan idols! How pitiable those must have seemed who, giving up their security and their comfort, decided to set out on so difficult a journey toward an unknown God. And yet within reach of their hand they had hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of pagan idols. But for the Magi the desire to find the truth, the desire to know the true God, was far stronger than all human jeering and mockery. The search for the true God was more important to them than the jeering and mockery of a seemingly intelligent world.

## SEEKING GOD

Dear faithful, on this Feast of the Epiphany we must realise and remind ourselves, we who are so often sunk in spiritual torpor, in spiritual indifference, that one cannot seek the Lord God, one cannot seek the Saviour and at the same time stand in the same place. Looking today at the Magi, whom we traditionally

call the three kings, we should remember that our life here on earth is like one great journey. We should remember that the goal of our human life here on earth is to attain eternal life in heaven, in heaven, where we hope to behold forever God Himself, God face to face.

And on this road, full of obstacles, difficulties, satanic snares, sufferings and often tears, we need, like the Magi, a star shining with brightness, a star that will show us the direction of our journey, a star that will give us strength, increase our hope, help us to persevere in our journey. And such a guide, such a star for each of us is the light of the one true religion, the Catholic religion, the religion of Christ. It is an indestructible star, possessing the wondrous power of ennobling human souls through sanctifying grace, a star that never loses its brightness, because it is not the work of human hands, but is the work of God Himself, one in the Holy Trinity.

You heard in today's Gospel: "Seeing the star, the Magi rejoiced with exceeding great joy", for it was leading them to Bethlehem. And we can only imagine with how great an attention they gazed at the light of this star, how carefully they took care not to lose it from sight. And we Catholics living in the twenty-first century, how do we treat the supernatural radiance of our Catholic faith? Unfortunately, so often we do not know the truths of our faith, so often we do not even try to learn them. We make light of the treasure of our Catholic faith, which, without any merit of our own, we received from God Himself. We are so often, my dear ones, religious ignoramuses, who close our eyes to the radiance that points the way to heaven, because we prefer to go astray. Of our own will we leave the road that the Lord God prepared for us, and choose the road on which Satan himself leads us, the road that leads us to eternal damnation.

What is more, my dear ones: through our indifference to matters of religion, through our ignorance of the truths of the faith, we so often allow the radiance of the Catholic religion to be obscured by artificial little stars of errors, half-truths, heresies, sin, and thereby we harm not only ourselves, but we also make it harder for so many souls to find the truth and to reach the living and true God.

## GOLD, FRANKINCENSE AND MYRRH

So do Catholics living in the twenty-first century differ so much from those pagans who mocked the Magi seeking God? Is it not the case that we too very often, instead of paying homage to God, instead of coming to know Him better each day, loving Him more strongly and serving Him more faithfully, we too prefer to ridicule those who remind us of the Saviour who awaits us? We prefer to lead a quiet, comfortable life in the shadow of contemporary pagan idols, in the shadow of the post-conciliar, ecumenical counterfeit of the Catholic religion, in the shadow of the idolatrous cult of Pachamama, in the shadow of heresies and blasphemies.

And what good is it, my dear ones, that, as you will hear in a moment in the Preface of this Holy Mass, "when Thine only-begotten Son appeared in the substance of our mortal flesh, He restored us anew by the light of His own immortality", if we Catholics flee from this light given to us anew and prefer to live in darkness, in the darkness of error, lies and sin?

My dear ones, let us not delay, but let us join the three Magi today, no matter how long we shall have to travel in order to meet the Lord God, no matter how many and how heavy the adversities we shall have to face here in earthly life. This one thing is certain: that the star of our holy Catholic religion, if only we gaze diligently upon it, if only we never lose it from our sight, will enable us to reach the goal we long for, the kingdom of heaven.

We heard in today's Gospel that the three kings, "entering into the house, found the Child with Mary His Mother, and falling down they adored Him". And as a sign of our sharing in this homage paid to the Child by the three Magi, we too bent our knees. May we, my dear ones, bend them before the Lord God more often than only once a year. May we fall on our knees before our Saviour as often as possible and bring Him a spiritual gift: the gold of living faith, the myrrh of sincere hope, and the frankincense of the love for God and neighbour burning within us.

For the Lord God waits for us unceasingly in the sacrifice of the Holy Mass, in the Most Blessed Sacrament, defenceless like a child, a prisoner of love, hidden under the sacramental species of bread and wine. May Christ, the true light that enlightens every man, brighten the darkness of our minds and hearts, so that

we may know Him, love Him, and serve Him alone. May we never betray our Lord to the contemporary Jewish kings, the Herods, even if they dress themselves up in purple and mitres.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.