

Comment on the Collect for the Solemnity of the Epiphany

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The Epiphany is the feast of the seekers of God; the God who desires to be found by us in His full manifestation of Love. In our Christian journey, God gives us the star of faith and hope to seek after him, certain that our desire for Him is rooted in His eternal desire for us.

Collect

*O God, who on this day
revealed your Only Begotten Son to the nations
by the guidance of a star,
grant in your mercy, that we, who know you already by faith,
may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.*

The Collect, or Opening Prayer, is the prayer that discloses the deep meaning of the particular Mass we are about to celebrate.

The Collect for the Epiphany points out to one of the core themes of this Solemnity: the journey towards the vision of God. Yes, because this feast is not only about the full manifestation of the Lord but also about the journey that leads us to this encounter.

In this Collect, we pray especially for those of us who have already received the gift of faith. The Lord has touched our hearts, and we cannot help but set off towards this beauty that has filled us with fascination. In this we are not alone: God has given us *the guidance of a star*. This star that guides us is a very bright star; it is the light of the secure hope the Lord has poured into our hearts when He revealed Himself to humanity. We seek God because he has already come to seek after us first!

But, perhaps, many things have come to obscure this comforting star in our life; we might have lost the memory of the times in which we have felt clearly the tender presence of the Lord and also the memory of our being baptised. The stars are quick to be covered by clouds, and our night can easily become dark and fearful.

Well, if this is the case for you or if you just want to rekindle the brightness of that precious star, this time can be a great occasion for it. This is the right moment to rediscover the luminous presence of God in our life as believers. God's presence is already in our own desire for Him. Let us remember: if we miss God now because we feel Him distant, that very sense of longing for Him is already a sign of His action in our life. Our desire for God, at times a suffered desire, is the mirror and the effect of His immense desire for us!

The mystery of the Epiphany reminds us that God is already present in our journey towards Him. It is the feast of all the seekers of God, no matter how much faith we might have in this particular stage of our life.

Eventually, we are all called to find God, and we will find out that He has waited for us all the way through. What we discover, though, can be quite different from what we had thought at first. For *"the beauty of His sublime glory"* is revealed in the infant Jesus: a baby who cannot defend Himself

and that you cannot help but love with all your heart. In that encounter between our desire and God's tenderness, all the plan of the creation is accomplished. We, like the Magi, rejoice in seeing the star resting on Jesus; and God, our Father, rejoices in receiving our love that He desires more than any other thing.

By following the star that God gives us in our journey, we can accomplish all this, which is our true happiness. Let us always pray, then, that in our life, we may always walk in a *starry night*.

Questions for reflection

- Do I cherish a constant memory of my baptism and of all the times I have felt God's presence in my life? Am I aware of how much this remembrance is important in my Christian journey?
- Do I lead my Christian life as a "foreigner and pilgrim" (*1 Peter 2:11*) on this earth, seeking God and trusting in His desire to be found by me?
- What images of God do I harbour in my heart? How does God's revelation in the infant Jesus affect my understanding of God and my relationship with Him?