**THURSDAY JANUARY 06 – EPIPHANY OF THE LORD [C]**

**And on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.**

**Jesus is born in Bethlehem of Judah and some Magi coming from the east to Jerusalem ask a particular question to the people: "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." What these Magi have seen is not certainly a natural event. It is a sign offered to them by the Lord, according to the old prophecy we find in the Book of Numbers: “Then Balaam gave voice to his oracle: The utterance of Balaam, son of Beor, the utterance of the man whose eye is true, The utterance of one who hears what God says, and knows what the Most High knows, Of one who sees what the Almighty sees, enraptured and with eyes unveiled. I see him, though not now; I behold him, though not near: A star shall advance from Jacob, and a staff shall rise from Israel.” (Num 24, 15-17) That this is a sign is attested by the fact that the star disappears in Jerusalem and then, immediately after, it appears and it is over the place where the Child was with Mary and Joseph.**

**Herod, a man with the heart of stone and, moreover, very evil, rather cruel, was greatly troubled. He sees a danger for his kingdom. He assembles all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, and inquires of them where the King of the Jews was to be born. They draw the reply from the prophecy of Micah: “But you, Bethlehem-Ephrathah too small to be among the clans of Judah, From you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel; Whose origin is from of old, from ancient times. (Therefore the Lord will give them up, until the time when she who is to give birth has borne, And the rest of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel.) He shall stand firm and shepherd his flock by the strength of the LORD, in the majestic name of the LORD, his God; And they shall remain, for now his greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth; he shall be peace.” (Mi 5, 1-4)**

**The Magi are sent to Bethlehem, but with a well-precise order. They have to go, search for the Child and then come back to the king and bring him a word. The announced reason is of great piety: “I too may go and do him homage.” The hidden reason in the heart is different: “So that I may eliminate him, killing him.” Thus, his kingdom would not have had any annoyance. For Herod, the king who is born is an usurper and he must be eliminated immediately. When the heart is of stone and, besides, one adds wickedness and evil, it becomes impossible to understand the deeds of God that are of salvation, of redemption, of liberation from every evil, of true peace. Herod is vain by nature. By nature, he cannot understand. But he is the responsible of such vain nature. Nature is placed by God in our hands to lead it into the highest holiness, in the great light of its truth, of justice, of peace. Everyone is responsible before God and men of his own nature corrupted and slave of concupiscence and of arrogance. Instead, today everything is justified in the name of the corrupted nature, devastated by evil, prisoner and slave of its instincts of sin and of vice. Christ Jesus is precisely born for that: not to take away the kingdom to Herod, but to take away Herod from his prison of spiritual and moral from the prison of his evil and cruel instincts. Christ Jesus is born to give every man the truth of its nature, rather to give him a nature that is participation of the nature of God.**

**Let us read the text of Mt 2,1-12**

**When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage." After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.**

**Who is Jesus for the Magi? He is God and one offers frankincense to God. He is king and one offers gold to the king. Not only is He God and King, He is also the man with the indescribable sufferance. They offer myrrh to the man with the indescribable sufferance. The entire mystery of Jesus the Lord is enclosed in these three gifts. Who is today Christ Jesus for us? A man as all the other men. We are more cruel and more evil than Herod himself in that. Today we have killed Christ Jesus in his Divinity, in his Eternity, in his eternal Sonship. We have killed Him in his mystery of redemption and of salvation. Why have we killed him? Because we have raised every other man to his same dignity. We have deprived Him of his glory and we have given it to a man similar to a calf eating hay. This is our God today. May the Mother of Jesus help us give Christ his eternal truth.**