



PREACHING THE EUCHARISTIC REVIVAL

Not every homily needs to refer to the Eucharistic Revival, and a connection between the readings and liturgy to the Revival ought not to be forced. At the same time, preaching in the context of Mass is intimately connected to the celebration of the Eucharist, and should help move us from word to sacrament to life. That being said, not every homily ought to end with an explicit mention that the Liturgy of the Eucharist comes next! Eucharistic preaching can take many forms. What follows are some “hints” or “prompts” that can help connect the readings and the Eucharist we are called to believe in, celebrate, and live... as Pope Benedict XVI encouraged us to do in *Sacramentum caritatis*....

https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20070222_sacramentum-caritatis.html

- ❖ **A Mystery to be Believed**: We have a rich Eucharistic faith. At the same time, the homily is not to devolve into a theological lecture or simply a topical sermon. There may be some days – depending on the readings, the day being observed, or the prayers for that day – when a more explicit mention of Eucharistic teaching may be woven into the homily, as noted below.
- ❖ **A Mystery to be Celebrated**: The Eucharistic context of our preaching cannot be ignored, and part of what we are called to do in our homilies is to help our listeners move into and celebrate fully the Liturgy of the Eucharist that follows. If Eucharist is about thanksgiving, does the homilist help those at Mass name the grace in their lives and express their gratitude? In moving from word to sacrament, the preacher may want to make explicit mention of the words and actions of the Mass as part of the homily... or, on occasion, even make a text from the Mass (such as the Eucharistic Prayer) the text through which he preaches.

- ❖ **A Mystery to be Lived**: What are the implications of our having celebrated the Eucharist? How do we connect liturgy and life? Eucharistic preaching ought to help move us from the hearing of the word to the celebration of the sacrament, and then to living the “liturgy of the world” in our particular place and time. So, our preaching needs to be concrete, and specific.

An overall approach that is worth considering during the Revival is mystagogical preaching. According to Emily Besl and Jeffrey Kemper, mystagogical preaching “illuminates the deep meaning of the liturgical act by reflection upon: the mystery (specific salvific event; Paschal Mystery) of Jesus Christ, the story that reveals the mystery (Scripture), the ritual that renders the mystery present (Liturgy), and the lived situation of the people participating in the liturgy.” In order to attend to each of these components, Besl and Kemper ask a series of questions, such as: What is it that Christ has done for us? What are the implications for our lives? What is it about the saving act the Scripture passage is trying to bring to our attention? What is it that ritual is effecting and communicating? What is the experience of the people participating? How do they or might they understand or interpret what is happening in the ritual? What is it that the Church intends for us to understand?

Mystagogical preaching weaves these four components (saving event, story, ritual, lived situation) together; it is synthetic not analytical (it puts together rather than takes apart and studies). It is not so much about telling people how to live, as revealing the deep meaning of Christ’s saving work in history and liturgy—which leads people to see differently, and thus come to live differently. It is characterized by:

- Making concrete and specific references to the liturgical rite (its words, actions, and structures)
- Looking to the Scriptures for ways that God has acted in the past analogous to the ways that God acts in the liturgical rite.
- Connecting past, present, and future explicitly—so that the community’s liturgy and life are seen in the wider context of salvation history.
- Being reflective of the Church’s doctrine.

A Note on the Gospel of Matthew

In Year A, we hear mostly from the Gospel of Matthew. The preacher may want to keep some things in mind as this Liturgical Year unfolds. First, the “Jewishness” of this gospel affords the preacher the opportunity to honor the fact that Jesus, his family, and his early followers were faithful, first-century Jews. There are numerous resources that can help the preacher make these connections, and avoid falling into the trap of unintentional anti-Judaism. Please see our diocesan website for links to resources: <https://www.davenportdiocese.org/preaching-links#AvoidingAntiJudaism>.

Second, the Lectionary itself is intentional in how it arranges the pericopes from this Gospel, reflecting the gospel author's own use of five discourses—perhaps echoing the five Books of Moses—as a way to organize the text. The *Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass* (<https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Rites/Lectionary.pdf>) from the Liturgy Office of the Bishops of England and Wales provides a helpful outline of the readings for Year A. They state: “In order to do justice to the intention of the Lectionary, the five great ‘sermons’ in Matthew’s Gospel will of necessity be the focal points of preaching and instruction. The narrative sections, which are placed in between the sermons, are composed in such a way that there is a unity and coherence in the whole work. Discourse and narrative stand side by side, so that the narrative chapters prepare the way for what follows in the discourses. Recognising the way in which the Lectionary has reflected the structure of Matthew’s Gospel, will enable preachers and readers to see the context of the readings from one week to the next.”

Christmastime

During **Christmastime**, we celebrate “the memorial of the Nativity of the Lord and of his first manifestations” (*Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar*, 32). Our task as preachers is not to treat these feasts simply as a recollection of past events, but as ongoing manifestations of Christ’s redemptive work for us. The celebration of Eucharist is another way that we experience Christ’s redemptive work for us here and now. In Luke, the angels sing the *Gloria* to proclaim the presence of Christ in the shepherds’ midst. At Mass, we sing the *Gloria* to do the very same thing – Christ’s presence in our midst, now under four modes: in minister and people, in word proclaimed and sacrament shared. Yet, during the Eucharistic Revival it is this latter mode of Presence that is of particular concern. In our preaching, as we draw connections between the Incarnation and the Eucharist, we need to be careful. The Incarnation and the Eucharist are not the same. Jesus did not just *appear* to be human... he was *fully* human... while the Eucharist *appears* as bread and wine to the senses. But both clearly show how much God loves us – enough to become God-with-us, whether as a human person who walked the earth 2000 years ago, or hidden under the forms of bread and wine. Such is the self-emptying love of Christ.

ILM 95. For the vigil and the three Masses of Christmas both the prophetic readings and the others have been chosen from the Roman tradition. The Gospel on the Sunday within the Octave of Christmas, Feast of the Holy Family, is about Jesus' childhood and the other readings are about the virtues of family life. On the Octave Day of Christmas, Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, the readings are about the Virgin Mother of God and the giving of the holy Name of Jesus. On the second Sunday after Christmas, the readings are about the mystery of the Incarnation. On the Epiphany of the Lord, the Old Testament reading and the Gospel continue the Roman tradition; the text for the reading from the Letters of the Apostles is about the calling of the nations to salvation. On the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, the texts chosen are about this mystery.

HD: “For the Vigil and the three Masses of Christmas both the prophetic readings and the others have been chosen from the Roman tradition” (ILM 95). A distinctive feature of the solemnity of the Lord’s Nativity is the custom of celebrating three different Masses: at midnight, at dawn, and during the day. In the reforms since the Second Vatican Council, an earlier vigil Mass has been added. Apart from monastic communities, it is unlikely that everyone would participate in all three (or four) celebrations; most people will attend one liturgy, which will be their “Christmas Mass”. (110) “The first disciples recognized the intimate bond between the Incarnation and the Paschal Mystery, as the hymn quoted by St. Paul in Philippians 2:5-11 testifies. The light of Midnight Mass is the light of the Easter Vigil.... A fundamental purpose of the homily is, as this *Directory* has noted often, to proclaim Christ’s Paschal Mystery; the texts of Christmas explicitly provide opportunities to do this.” (116) “Another purpose of the homily is to lead the community to the Eucharistic sacrifice, wherein the Paschal Mystery becomes present. A powerful signpost here is the word ‘today’ that recurs frequently in the liturgical texts for the Masses of Christmas. The mystery of Christ’s birth is present in this celebration, but like his first coming it can be seen only with the eyes of faith. The great ‘sign’ for the shepherds was simply a poor baby lying in a manger, yet they returned glorifying and praising God for what they had seen. We must perceive with the eyes of faith the same Christ born today under the forms of bread and wine.” (117) “The readings and prayers of Christmas provide rich fare for God’s people on their pilgrimage through life; they reveal Christ as the Light of the world and invite us to enter into the Paschal Mystery of our redemption through the “today” of our Eucharistic celebration. The homilist can present this banquet to God’s people who gather to celebrate the Lord’s birth, urging them to imitate Mary, the Mother of Jesus, who ‘kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart’ (Gospel, Mass at Dawn).” (119)

PNL: “The Christmas cycle is a proclamation of the presence of God in human history....” Receiving this gift “forms us into a community that lives by it and shoes itself to be the place where God has pitched a tent among us. The Church is the community of grace and compassion for the life of the world. Christmas is the promise of Easter in the lives of those who receive the child-servant.” (p. 35) “There is a progression of insight from the midnight gathering to the assembly that takes place during the daytime hours. At midnight the birth in history was proclaimed. At dawn the initiative of God’s gift was declared, and the baptized community’s joyful gratitude was announced. In [the] third celebration, we meditate on the identity of Christ and on our own new way of life in the Word made flesh.” (p. 52)

This year, the Feast of the Holy Family is observed on the Friday after Christmas, and the Baptism of the Lord on the Monday after Epiphany. Therefore, they are not included in this resource.

Christmas Vigil

- Is 62:1-5
- Ps 89
- Acts 13:16-17, 22-25
- Mt 1:1-25 (or 1:18-25)

Connecting to the Revival

*MB = Mystery to be Believed; MC = Mystery to be Celebrated; ML = Mystery to be Lived;
PO = Prayer over the Offerings; PaC = Prayer after Communion*

MB: This liturgy bridges Advent and Christmas; there is a sense of “eager anticipation” (HD 112) – something extraordinary is about to happen! Rather than a dry list of names, the Gospel account makes an astounding claim. While the genealogy makes clear Jesus’ full humanity, the end of the Gospel – the account of Joseph’s dream – reminds us of Christ’s full divinity. In other words, the genealogy reminds us that the extraordinary is often hidden in the ordinary, where we least expect to find it!

That’s what sacraments are about: Christ present to us in the most ordinary of things. The “now and yet to come” of the Kingdom (AA(C), p. 34). In the Eucharist, simple bread and wine – what would be found on any table – become for us “the bread of life” and “our spiritual drink” (Order of Mass, 23, 25). Do we await our celebration of Eucharist each week with a similar “eager anticipation?”

MC: This is one of two days during the liturgical year when we genuflect during the Creed as we profess our belief in the Incarnation – “and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.” Adoration is the proper disposition before so great a gift, such self-emptying love! We also genuflect in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, Christ’s ongoing presence *par excellence* with and for us. Adoration is the proper disposition before so great a gift, such self-emptying love!

ML: Isaiah reminds us that we are not forsaken or desolate; God is with us – and in no more intimate a way than the Eucharist. God delights in us; God espouses us (DL1 p. 196). In the Eucharist, we share in the wedding feast of the Lamb. Rather than a dry list of names from long ago, the genealogy tells our story, too. Like Jesus’ ancestors, we are sinners. Through baptism, we are brought into his “line” and are made part of salvation history (DL1, p. 198). The story that, as Matthew puts it, began with Abraham and David, is our story, too. How will we write our parts?

Christmas Mass at Night

- Is 9:1-6
- Ps 96
- Ti 2:11-14
- Lk 2:1-14

Connecting to the Revival

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MB: Our faith, and the readings this night, are filled with paradoxes. Isaiah's conquering hero, the King of the Universe, present as a powerless infant before the power of imperial Rome. As we find again and again in the Bible, "God's choice of the most unlikely and frequently overlooked members of society to accomplish God's will" (PNL, p. 39).

In Beth-lehem (the House of Bread!), in a manger (feeding trough!), we meet the God who took on flesh and bone; the infinite become finite, the eternal entering time. The God of all Creation who, *today*, comes not with angel choirs but hidden, appearing as the most ordinary of foods: bread and wine, made from the gifts of creation. Space and time themselves become ways for us to encounter – to come face-to-face—with this God who loves us. "The ordinary becomes transparent and reveals the extraordinary" (PNL p. 40). That's the reality we celebrate in and through the sacraments. As we take on faith that Christ entered history, we also take on faith that Christ enters our place and time. The God who was seen and touched 2000 years ago is still seen and touched today: "The Eucharist we celebrate, the bread we eat, and the wine we drink are signs through which we touch God. Because the Word became a man, he was able to give his life for us. Thus, there came into existence those sacred signs of the paschal mystery, which enable us to live henceforth in sacramental union with the Lord." (LY1, p. 201)

MC: One more paradox: we gather in darkness, in the middle of the night, to await the light (Isaiah, Collect; AA pp. 33-34). Yes, we await the light of Christmas Day. But we just don't tell stories of the past. Note the gospel verse: "*today* a Savior is born for us!" The Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, are ways that Christ comes to us, is born for us, *today*. The paradox of, even here and now, even in the darkness, joining in the songs of angels: *Glory to God in the highest! Holy, Holy, Holy!*

ML: Isaiah gives us a vision of peace, of liberation from oppression. We find such healing and liberation in the Eucharist – and, having tasted the new age inaugurated by Christ, we are sent from the Eucharist to be instruments of that same healing and liberation, to dispel the darkness with the light we have been given. Where do we see the light burning brightly today, and the darkness giving way? Where are those dark places we still need to go – both in the world and in our own hearts? How are we to live honorably (PaC); how are we being called to, as Paul put it, "reject godless ways and worldly desires" (AA, p.31)?

Christmas Mass at Dawn

- Is 62:1:1-12
- Ps 97
- Ti 3:4-7
- Lk 2:15-20

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MB: The shepherds saw a baby in a manger; nothing special to the naked eye. But to the eyes of faith, a deeper reality: the Christ. (HD 114). Confronted with the Eucharist, do we see with only bodily eyes – bread and wine – or do we see with the eyes of faith: Christ Present? Hearing the Scriptures proclaimed, do we hear a nice story about yesterday – or Christ speaking to us today? As we gather together, do we see a collection of people we may or may not like, agree or disagree with, whom we might call friend or enemy, or do we see Christ? Is our response like the shepherds’ – returning home, glorifying God for what we see and hear when we gather here?

MC: As Paul notes, God comes not because of what we do, but because of God’s mercy (PNL, p. 44). God “frequents” us as we gather for the liturgy; we are not “forsaken” (Is; PNL, p. 42). God “breaks in” to our ordinary lives; we are called to respond in gratitude. (PNL, p. 46). That’s what we do every time we gather for Eucharist: give thanks. When we, as the baptized (Ti), gather for Mass, celebrating the Eucharist “as an efficacious sign of our liberation and a pledge of our salvation, we experience a joy that the communion antiphon tries to express” (LY1, p. 202):

*Rejoice, O Daughter Sion; lift up praise, Daughter Jerusalem:
Behold, your King will come, the Holy One and Savior of the world.*

ML: There are two responses called for by the coming of Christ: there is exultation and praise and proclamation by the shepherds; and there is the silent contemplation of Mary (DL1, pp. 209-11). In baptism, God chose us for rebirth. Likewise, God gathers us for Eucharist. Then, renewed by the Spirit, we are sent. Like the shepherds, we encounter Christ in... we are changed... and, changed, we can’t help but tell everyone what we have seen. Like Mary, we are invited to ponder our encounter with Christ at Mass, in the Eucharist, in the depths of our hearts. (PNL, p. 45) The presence of the shepherds also reminds us of God’s preferential option for the poor (PNL, p. 47); it was not the rich and powerful of Jerusalem who gathered at the manger! As the *Catechism* reminds us: “The Eucharist commits us to the poor” (#1397).

Christmas Mass During the Day

- Is 52:7-10
- Ps 98
- Heb 1:1-6
- Jn 1:1-18 (or 1:1-5,9-14)

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MB: God (through Christ) created all that is; in Christ, creation has been restored (see: Hebrews, as well as the Collect, Preface II for the Nativity, and the PO). Today's prayer texts use words like "restored," "reconciliation," "raising up," even sharing in Christ's divinity! "The incarnation has a trajectory: the cross and resurrection" (AA(B) p. 32). This sweeping narrative – Christ's Paschal Mystery – is what we proclaim in the Liturgy of the Word and experience, actualize, in the Liturgy of the Eucharist; that we celebrate at every Mass. We, too, are restored and reconciled when we celebrate the Eucharist.

MC: When the deacon (or priest) adds a bit of water to the chalice of wine, he says: "By the mystery of this water and wine, may we come to share the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity." We hear those same words echoed in the Collect. In the Incarnation, "all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God" (Communion Antiphon) – a salvation that we experience at Eucharist.

ML: What difference does the Incarnation make? The readings and prayers today proclaim: all the difference in the world! In the Incarnation, Christ entered time and space for our sake. Restored, reconciled, raised up, we are made sharers in the divine life.

Note that in Preface II one of the fruits of such healing – a healing that we experience in the Eucharist – is that unity of *all creation* is restored. The Incarnation is not just for human beings, but for the entire cosmos! Kingdom life has been inaugurated, but it has not fully unfolded (just look around!). Where are signs of the Kingdom today? And what are the ways that we can more fully live a Kingdom, a Eucharistic, life – *especially* in terms of caring for creation, a creation that we are a part of, a creation that God loves enough to also restore!

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

- Nm 6:22-27
- Ps 67
- Gal 4:4-7
- Lk 2:16-21

Connecting to the Revival

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MB: Marian feasts aren't primarily about Mary. First of all, Mary points to Christ. And, secondly, Mary's story is our story, the Church's story. The story of those for whom she intercedes (see Collect). In regards to Christ, this feast returns us to the centrality of the Incarnation: Jesus was truly human, a humanity given through the womb of Mary. Mary's "yes" – her "Amen" – made our own adoption as God's children possible.

James A. Wallace holds Mary up for us as "a model of saying 'yes' to God, of becoming a willing participant in the saving plan that began with the incarnation" (PHH, p. 163). He goes on: "From the moment of her 'yes,' Mary begins her growth into the image of the New Eve, woman of the new creation, mother of Jesus and of all the living. But thus 'yes' does not set her apart from the rest of us; it places her ahead of us. 'Yes' us what we are all called to say, as the mystic Caryll Houselander reminds us, so that we might fulfill the universal vocation of bearing Christ in our bodies and giving him to the world. 'Nothing but things essential for us are revealed to us about the Mother of God; the fact that she was wed to the Holy Spirit and bore Christ into the world,'" (PHH, pp. 163-4).

MC: We proclaim our "Amen" – our "Yes, let it be so!" – at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer. We say "yes" to what has been prayed out loud by the priest in our name: to our self-offering through, with, and in Christ to the Father; to the Spirit's transformation, not only of the Eucharistic gifts, but of us as well. We do so again when presented with the Host and Chalice. Our "Amen" is not simply an intellectual assent to what the Church teaches about the Eucharist. Like Mary's *fiat* – yes – we are pledging ourselves to being transformed by the sacrament we receive, and, in turn, to living Eucharistic lives. We are saying, yes, I am part of the Body of Christ! In the words of Augustine,

If you, therefore, are Christ's body and members, it is your own mystery that is placed on the Lord's table! It is your own mystery that you are receiving! You are saying "Amen" to what you are: your response is a personal signature, affirming your faith. When you hear "The body of Christ", you reply "Amen." Be a member of Christ's body, then, so that your "Amen" may ring true! (Sermon 272)

ML: What are the implications of our “yes” – our “Amen” at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer and in the Communion Procession? We are sent (“apostle-d”), like the Son was sent (PNL p. 63), cooperating, like Mary, with Christ’s ongoing mission (HD 123). Sent to be agents of peace – as the great blessing from Numbers invokes: not a minimalist view of peace, as the absence of overt violence. No. But we are sent to be agents of *shalom*: “the fundamental characteristic of Jewish blessing, the condition of absolute well-being” (PNL, p. 61). Or, put another way, to “fulfill the universal vocation of bearing Christ in our bodies and giving him to the world” (PHH, p. 164).

Caveat: The readings today give us the opportunity to acknowledge and honor the Jewishness of the Holy Family. We add a little more detail to the gospel we heard at Christmas Dawn: after the shepherds leave, as faithful Jews, Mary and Joseph have their son circumcised on the 8th day (a mark that he is a true Jew, a child of the Covenant) and name him Jesus—God saves – a not uncommon Jewish name that proclaims Israel’s faith. It also good to remember that “Abba” is not a way of addressing God unique to Jesus (and it doesn’t mean, “daddy”). It is a term of intimacy that was not unusual among the Jewish people. By addressing God this way, we (like Jesus and Paul) show our *continuity* with Judaism, not a break with the traditions of our ancestors in faith.

Solemnity of the Epiphany

- Is 60:1-6
- Ps 72
- Eph 3:2-3a,5-6
- Mt 2:1-12

Connecting to the Revival

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MB: As Christmastime unfolds, the revelation of the Incarnate Word broadens. What begins in the intimacy of a small family spirals outward. With the Baptism, and at Cana, Christ is manifest to Israel; with Epiphany, to the Gentile world. The gospel antiphons for morning and evening prayer on Epiphany reflects the ancient usage when the nativity and the visit of the Magi, the baptism, and the wedding at Cana were commemorated on one great feast:

Three mysteries mark this holy day: today the star leads the Magi to the infant Christ; today water is changed into wine for the wedding feast; today Christ wills to be baptized by John in the river Jordan to bring us salvation (Evening Prayer II).

“The Church does not celebrate Epiphany as a past event... but as a living reality of salvation in today’s world and in the Church” (DL1, pp. 261-2). At the same time, the “liturgy not only celebrates the mystery of the Epiphany: it *is* the mystery of the Epiphany in act. This is also true for all sacraments, collectively and individually. Christ is present there and recognized in faith as

the Lord of glory” (DL1, p. 263). So, we can say, once more, that a privileged way that Christ is manifest today is the Eucharist. Again, the Incarnation shows that God comes to us in the “stuff of earth” – and is the basis for our sacramental life and worldview (AA, p. 264). We hear this echoed in the Preface’s “stress on the manner in which Christ manifests himself: through our human nature.... It is the basis for the whole sacramental life of the Church, since Christ himself is already the sacrament of our meeting with God, and this epiphanic light continues to shine in and through the Church.” (LY1, p. 264)

MC: “When we celebrate the liturgy and the sacraments, we do not bring gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh, but our personhood and our hearts” (DL1, p. 263). We bring them individually and, as shown in the first and second readings, as a community, a congregation, a body (see the Prayers over the Offerings; AA, p. 50). We bring all that we are and all that we do, our joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties (see *Gaudium et spes*, 1). In the words of Pope Benedict, in *Sacramentum caritatis* (47): *in the bread and wine that we bring to the altar, all creation is taken up by Christ the Redeemer to be transformed and presented to the Father. In this way we also bring to the altar all the pain and suffering of the world, in the certainty that everything has value in God's eyes.* That is what the bread and wine signify; that is what we offer through, with, and in Christ, together.

There is a dynamic to the liturgy that we need to keep in mind. God is the giver of all gifts; we receive such gifts with gratitude... and make our return-gift to God. We receive the gifts of creation, and of human work, and return with bread and wine... and all that we lay on the altar. All that we give is transformed, and given back to us: as Eucharist, as gifts to be used for the good of others, as the healing we need. We are then sent to make a return-gift of our lives to God by living Eucharistic lives.

ML: With the Epiphany, “the readings and liturgical prayers shift the axis of the congregation’s worship from contemplation to action. The days after Christmas... are continued reflections and deep ponderings of the mystery of the nativity.... [now attention shifts to] the implications of God taking on human flesh in a public... global way.” (AA, p. 50-1)

So, how do we “manifest” Christ to the world? When people see us – individually and as the Church – what do they see? A light to the nations? Or just more of the same darkness? What difference does it make that Christ took on our human flesh? “Are we willing to see the transformation of our earthly reality into the gift of witness to the incarnation [see Preface] (AA, p. 51)? If so, what would that look like? The homilist might name the ways he has seen members of the assembly use the gifts they have been given not only for the good of their parish but also for the sake of the wider community... how he has seen others live Eucharistic lives, “incarnating” Christ today (see AA, p. 51).

As we approach the close of Christmastime with this feast, we are reminded of our mandate to share the good news: “The missionary activity of the Church is not taken lightly...” (LY1, 262). “Every Christian... is to be a magus for this day, in search of the Light and guided by it in the life

of faith, while drawing the nations along” (LY1, 237). The journey has begun; it is not finished. The texts of Epiphany paint an eschatological vision (DL1, p. 260), a reminder that we are a pilgrim people. The Reign of God is here but not yet. “All of us are called to share the same promise of definitive regathering in the heavenly Jerusalem, where we shall all pay homage to the glory of the Lord. We already pay this homage when we celebrate the Eucharist.” (DL1, p. 263)

N.B. In commenting on Ephesians, PNL states: “The early church may have cherished the hope and conviction of universality, but it seems that it had to rethink what this might mean. The message of this passage claims the Gentiles are co-heirs precisely as Gentiles and not as initiates who have come to Christ through the faith of Israel. This new revelation does not demean the importance of the Jewish faith for Jewish Christians. It respects it but does not insist on it as a prerequisite for admission into the Church. The one thing necessary is to be ‘in Christ’.” (p. 72)

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