

HOMILY DELIVERED BY REV. FR. JUDE EMUNEMU ON JANUARY 4, 2026 @ ST. ANTHONY CATHOLIC CHURCH,
JEAN LAFITTE LA BEING THE SOLEMNITY OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD, YEAR A

THEME: ***AN ENCOUNTER THAT TRANSFORMS***

Today, the Church celebrates the solemnity of Epiphany – a day that reveals the unfolding of God's great light to the Gentiles. We gather with the Magi, the three wise men from the East, who followed the star that led them to Jesus, the Light of the world. As we reflect on this feast, we encounter a message that calls us to let the light of Christ shine into our lives, leading us not only to encounter Him, but to be transformed by His presence.

The journey of the Magi is more than a simple visit; it is a profound encounter with God Himself. They were outsiders, Gentiles—strangers to the covenant God had made with Israel. Yet, they were drawn by the light, by the promise of a Savior. And upon meeting Jesus, they didn't

just pay homage; they worshiped. They recognized that Jesus was no ordinary child, but the King of kings, worthy of adoration. In this, they show us the proper response to encountering Christ—worship and adoration.

This encounter changed them. The Gospel tells us that after meeting Jesus, they “*departed to their country by another way.*” They were never the same. An encounter with Jesus changes us; it transforms our lives. We are called to follow Him, to take a different path, one that leads us into His love and mission, to bring light into a world often shrouded in darkness.

The light of Christ is a light that welcomes all people—Jews and Gentiles alike. This is the great revelation of the Epiphany: God’s plan of salvation is for

all people, not just a select few. As we heard in the First Reading, “Nations shall walk by your light,” and in the Psalm: “All kings shall pay him homage, all nations shall serve him.” The covenant that was initially offered to Israel now extends to the Gentiles—to outsiders, like the Magi, who are welcomed into God’s promise. Through Christ, we become part of a new covenant, a people called to share in His love and salvation.

The Second Reading from Ephesians reminds us that we, as believers, are also part of this great mystery. Through faith in Christ, we are incorporated into the covenant, called to be sharers of the promises of God. This is the radical inclusion of the Gospel: God does not exclude, He invites.

So, what does this mean for us, disciples of Jesus, today? It calls us to be bearers of His light, to allow our encounter with Christ to shape and change us. We are to be the light in a world that desperately needs it, bringing hope and love to those around us. And, just as the Magi did, we are to worship, to place Christ at the center of our lives and to respond to His love with lives of adoration and service.

Let us ask ourselves: Are we walking by the light of Christ? Are we open to encountering Him in new and transformative ways? Let this Epiphany be a moment to renew our commitment to bring the light of Christ to the world and to be faithful disciples of the One who calls us all into His love.