

Homily

Epiphany

8 January 2017

Arise, shine out... for your light has come, the glory of the Lord is rising on you. What a wonderful and beautiful Christmas we have been celebrating. Our light has come. Jesus has been born among us and **continues** to be born among us.

Though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples... Herod is still telling his lies, manipulating public opinion for his own evil ends. Innocent people are slaughtered, the weak and the poor pushed to one side.

I'm told we now live in a post-truth society. Winning votes, saying what people want to hear, peddling the latest populist sound-bite is all that seems to matter. So where do we go from here? What hope is there for our sick society and our fractured world?

We celebrate today wise men from the east following a strange new sign in the cosmos. We celebrate a mystery *revealed through the spirit*. We celebrate today a child in a manger to whom the whole world are making their way to do him homage.

This is the only truth. This is the only peace plan available. This is the only healing for our sickness. It is not something that can be manufactured or managed. It is from above, from God, from what St Paul calls "*a revelation*".

As a people, as a Church, as a parish, we need to attend to this truth. We need to look out for that star. We need to be open to the revelation of the mystery. This must be the first task of the Parish Pastoral Council. This must be the first task of all of us. And it is something we do together, listening to God's word and allowing it to dwell in our hearts.

Gold, frankincense and myrrh are all of a piece with this truth and this mystery. We approach the Christ child, not for our own gain or advantage. We approach the Christ child to give of ourselves. This is what truth is - not a tradeable commodity, but a gift that requires total response, total commitment, total love.

Pray for me. Pray for the Parish Pastoral Council. Pray for one another. Pray for Pope Francis. Pray for our Church and the world.

All nations shall fall prostrate before you, O Lord.

Fr Michael