

*Sermon from the Second Sunday after Epiphany: Marriage, Part 1*

January 28, 2018

During the time of Epiphany, the Church looks at three manifestations of the Divinity of Our Lord. The first is the manifestation by the star showing the location of the King of Kings so that the Kings of the earth can come and acknowledge the divinity of the Newborn Savior. The Three Kings bring the gifts of gold, incense and myrrh, which gifts contain a divine mystery: the gold to show forth the power of the King, the incense used to show forth His priesthood, and the myrrh in preparation of the burial of the Lord.

The second manifestation, celebrated on January 13, 2018, is the Baptism of the Lord, where our Lord descends into the Jordan with John the Baptist to be baptized by him. In being baptized, our Lord sanctifies the water by His contact with it, and upon coming out of the Jordan, there is the manifestation of the Trinity, whereby we see Christ, the Savior, and the Holy Ghost descending upon Him in the form of a dove, and we hear the Father speaking from the clouds, "This is my Beloved Son."

The third manifestation is celebrated on the Second Sunday after Epiphany. The Gospel reading of that day is where our Lord works His first public miracle in the presence of His disciples and at the insistence of his mother during the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. (John 2:1-11) It is telling that this first miracle He wrought at a wedding feast. Marriage is a very important institution established by God in the beginning – in Genesis, Chapter 2 – and our Lord elevated it to the level of a sacrament so it becomes a source of grace and sanctification. It is evident from the way the Holy Ghost presents this sacrament in Sacred Scripture and the way the Church presents it in the liturgy, that marriage has an important role in the life of the Church.

Marriage has as one of its ends the rearing and raising of offspring to populate the world and to subdue it; that is, to use it in accordance with God's laws and for His greater honor and glory. But marriage also has the purpose of raising more saints for heaven – and to first populate the Church and thus prepare young souls for heaven.

To remain a virgin in the celibate state is a higher state in life, but it is also a special vocation to which God calls certain souls. For the most part, people are attracted to the married state.

*Rev. Charles Van Vliet, FSSP*

*Pastor, Regina Caeli Parish*