

Fr. O’Conner’s Homily January 5th 2020
Feast of the Epiphany

Friday morning many of us were shocked to hear that the U.S. had killed Iran’s top military leader. What was your reaction? I started to wonder where all this is leading. Will there be more violence? Sure there will be payback. And then what? Is this the way to bring peace to our world? For me these are religious questions, not political questions.

Perhaps the wise men who appear in today’s Gospel were from Persia, the country now known as Iran. They were Magi in search of the light. They saw the rising of the light, the star of Bethlehem.

There is much darkness, much violence. The light of faith seems darker. This is especially so among our youth. Our Churches and Catholic Schools are not coping well with this darkness. The number of religious sisters and Catholic schools has declined in our country.

But we still proclaim the birth of Jesus our newborn King. We proclaim His dying for us and His rising from the dead.

It is we who bring the Light of Christ, the light of faith into our world, our home, our neighborhood, It is we would introduce Jesus to our children and grandchildren. We who love them, stand by them. Reveal to them this babe in Bethlehem.

I’d like to speak to you about a simple way to share our faith with family and friends and fellow parishioners. It’s called Lectio Divina. All we need for this method is a Bible and a small community, even especially your family.

The group starts with a reading from Scripture. Normally the Sunday Gospel is a good place to start. There are three steps. Someone in the group reads the Gospel aloud. Then the entire group sits in silence. Then the leader asks, “What did you hear?” Each person in the group picks a word or phrase which touched him/her or caught their attention and shares it with the group. The same Scripture is read again followed by another short period of silence. Then the leader asks, “What does it mean?” After this period of sharing, the Gospel may be read aloud a third time followed by another period of silence. The questions for sharing is, “What will it cost to follow this Gospel?”

At Our Lady of Americas, our Lectio Divina group have found this practice to be very refreshing, even joyful and very prayerful. It also brings us close to each other. We become friends, community even family.

Remember there’s no need for us to walk in darkness when we can share a great light.

In closing I’d like to share with you a short Epiphany Prayer/ Blessing:

“When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with the flocks, the work of Christmas begins”:

“To feed the hungry, to release the prisoners, to rebuild the nations, to bring peace among brothers, to make music with the heart.”

Any may I add, *to share light/ faith with one another.*