

Dear Friends,

Remember whenever you made a new discovery? Remember how exciting it was to see something for the first time? Somehow, every new discovery sparked the imagination and peaked our interest in things that led us to further investigation.

It seems that children in every age go through lingering stages of fascination with certain things. When I was little, I recall being fascinated with dinosaurs. I read voraciously about them. I used to imagine how big they were and what it must have been like for them to be roaming around on this planet. When I was able to go to a museum and see a dinosaur skeleton for the first time, I was awestruck at the magnitude of its size. I was mind-boggled by the age of the bones. I lingered around it for a long period of time just to soak in the mystery of what I was looking at.

In some ways, I did the same thing when I was older. During my college years, I studied art and was particularly captured by my Art History course. It was there that I grew in a much deeper appreciation of the Masters and their unique styles. A few years later, when I had the opportunity to visit the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., I saw a collection of original works by some of the great masters that I had studied. I was completely mesmerized by these original works. I could hardly believe that I was standing there witnessing these monumental masterpieces and was astounded by the sheer mastery of their technique. I think that I irritated the people that I was with because I spent so much time studying these great paintings in detail. It did not matter to me because the experience awakened within me a tremendous love for art.

If these kinds of discoveries have such an impact upon us, think what the discovery of the infant Jesus would have been like for the Wise Men who followed the star leading them to Him in the manger! The revelation of Christ to these wanderers obviously had a profound and lasting impact upon them. They set off looking for one thing and discovered something far greater than they could have ever imagined! Their minds; their imaginations were illuminated as they realized that they were gazing upon the Newborn King, the Savior of the World. To make this discovery awakened within them something that must have impacted them for the rest of their lives. They were changed men. The Scriptures tell us that because of their experience, they could not return to King Herod who sought news about the child. Instead, led by the Holy Spirit, they departed by another route.

It is this same kind of discovery that God desires for us as we celebrate this Feast of the Epiphany. He wants us to have a deep and intimate encounter with Jesus, the Lord, and to develop a deepening fascination with His life. Unlike worldly fascinations which come and go or increase and fade with familiarity, our encounter with the Lord only becomes greater and more profound. Jesus is the ultimate mystery. He never gets old!

Open your heart and your mind as Jesus manifests himself to you. Allow him to bring you to an ever increasing Epiphany and discovery of His plan for you. Don't ever let the cloud of cynicism or doubt creep in. He is the Lord of the Universe! What could be more fascinating than that? God bless.

Fr. Paul