

Epiphany

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. [...] Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star’s appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage.” After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.



The Magi—wise men, royalty from the East—were drawn by the One proclaimed by the star as the king of all peoples. So they set out on a journey, seeking him.... “Overjoyed at seeing the star,” they were ready to leave everything and face any problem they might encounter on the way. And yet they were not sure about where they were going. En route they had to continually ask for directions, seeking to read the signs sent by God. They had to be alert to Herod’s trickery. They had to be clever in following the plan of God so as to finally reach the Child: “And on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage.”

The journey of the Magi is a description of the faith-journey each one of us is called to make in the Church, which gives us the gifts of the Word to enlighten our way; the sacraments, in which we recognize the Lord; and the witness of others. In fact, it is in the concrete circumstances of daily life, including the light we receive from Scripture, that each of us can find the star to be followed. This star is God’s call, our vocation. On our journey, we learn to perceive the divine presence in both happy and sad times. Sr. Charles Borromeo said that we shouldn’t be surprised at this because God, in his infinite wisdom, can draw good even from evil. The Christian life is a continual act of gratitude for the presence of God in every event of every day. May we too set out courageously, ready to open the treasure chest of our heart and to place the gift of our life in the hands of the Child Jesus. Only his hands can safeguard our gift and enable it to yield its fruit to the full.

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In virtue of their baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples (cf. Mt. 28:19). All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization.... The new evangelization calls for personal involvement on the part of each of the baptized (EG 120).