

Isaiah 60: 1-60, Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6, Matthew 2: 1-12

FOCUS: Jesus came as King for all the world.

Today, in our seasonal way of counting, is the twelfth day of Christmas, culminating the feast and emphasizing the manifestation of Jesus as the Light for the whole world. The Magi-traditionally identified as astronomers-represent the many people who find in the signs around them indicators pointing to the mystery of Jesus. Psalm Seventy-two captures the wondrous spirit of this day. Its refrain, "Lord, every nation on earth shall adore you," echoes the hope and mission of the Church.

Today's Gospel illustrates differing reactions to the coming of Christ. We can identify three possibilities almost immediately: the chief priests and scribes could quote the correct Scriptures that alluded to the Messiah's coming, yet were indifferent to seeking him out; Herod was troubled by the news of the newborn King of the Jews and wanted to destroy him; the Magi were those who were willing to journey afar to find the One so wondrously revealed.

As harsh as it might seem, the closest parallel today for the scribes and chief priests would be those Christians who have settled for a bookish knowledge of Jesus. They can, perhaps, speak correctly about the place of Jesus in their religion, yet give little evidence to the Light of the World by the way they live and make decisions. Indifference can become a major obstacle to those who take their Christian faith for granted. Though not generally associated with the Christmas season, the Book of Revelation describes these uncommitted believers; "I know your are neither cold nor hot. I wish your were either cold or hot. So, because your are lukewarm...I will spit you out of my mouth." (Rv 3:15-16)

Herod wasn't lukewarm; he responded with deep hostility. Herod veiled his evil design with eagerness to have the Magi find the child in order that he might do him homage. His true intention was to destroy any threat to his position and privilege. Herod might represent the power figures in our world today who thwart the well-being of others to protect their own privileged wealth and positions of authority. Even in this time of Christmas joy we do not escape the hint of death and rejection that accompanies the story of the birth of Jesus into our world!

The third group holds the place of prominence today. The Magi are foreigners coming from afar, eager to acknowledge the newborn King. Their journey culminated when they found "the child with Mary his mother." Their willingness to journey afar, their eagerness to find the goal of their quest, their ability to read the signs of their lives, are all marks of the true believer and follower of Christ. They represent the best that we are to be. Vatican Council II describes our faith life as a journey- we are a pilgrim Church. In these faithful Magi we can take a lesson of commitment and become more fully the Christians we are called to be.

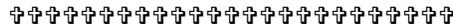
Many spiritual authors have written about one's journey of faith and the never-ending quest of one's spiritual pilgrimage through life. We are directed to: "Go and search diligently for the child." The Feast of the Epiphany affirms that Christ is revealed to everyone. Can we find in ourselves the desire of the Magi to search and journey, and discover?

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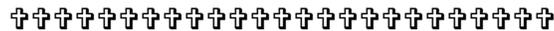
Marriage Renewal

Please join us on Saturday, February 15th, for our parish celebration of marriage. The day will consist of a workshop, Mass with the renewal of vows, a dinner and dance. Child care will be provided for the afternoon. More information will be provided as we get closer, so mark your calendars now.

Parish Council The first meeting of the Parish Council for 2003 will be held on 8 Jan @ 1630 in the Parish Rectory. These meetings are open to all registered parishioners.

We Pray for our parish every day at 1205 when we celebrate Mass. Please join us when you can.

During the week of January 13th – 17th we will celebrate a Communion Service instead of Mass



Attendance and Offering Last Weekend:

Attendance 297 Offering \$1,350.38
**The Designated Offering : Feb 8/9 will be
“Food for the Poor”**

