

January 3, 2021

Epiphany of Our Lord

Being like the Magi

“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.” – MT 2: 9-11

This weekend we remember and celebrate the Epiphany of Our Lord. It is the time when the newborn king of the Jews is revealed to the nations as was foretold by the prophets. The Jews had been awaiting a messiah for many generations. But now, Christ the Lord is recognized as king by gentiles who are non-believers. Yet they came to know and understand the significance of this miraculous birth.

The magi, or “wise men”, as we have come to know them, recognized the signs that something significant was taking place. They were astronomers who looked to the stars for signs about what was happening. They saw a new star rising in the sky such as they had never seen before. The ruler, King Herod, was jealous and troubled by this revelation of a newborn king in his territory. He felt threatened that someone else – let alone an infant – might challenge his power. Meanwhile the magi, upon finding the child, paid homage by offering precious and meaningful gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

As we move through the Christmas narrative, it’s interesting to note that that the people who were considered most important in society at that time were not the ones to receive the revelation of the birth of this child. The chief priests, temple

officials, the secular king, and other authorities were all outside characters. It was the humble and lowly shepherds, and the magi that were the first to receive the good news of the Savior's birth and found their way to the child. Christ was in their presence, but the local authorities failed to recognize Him, and would always be threatened by Him until the time of His death.

Is it still that way in our world today? Do we recognize the promptings of the Holy Spirit in our lives that are calling us to a closer relationship with Jesus Christ? While you may not have gold, frankincense and myrrh to offer, the best gift you can give Jesus in this new year is your heart and soul. Make a resolution this year for Jesus Christ to be the king of your life.

Bishop Gregory Parkes