



Daily Reflections

January 5, 2020

Scripture

Matthew 2:1-12

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.
Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people,
He inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.
They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea,
for thus it has been written through the prophet:
And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
since from you shall come a ruler,
who is to shepherd my people Israel.”
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.

Our Scripture Reflection

Today we continue our celebration of the Christmas season by commemorating the feast of the Epiphany. The word Epiphany means “showing” of “revealing”. The highlight of this feast is the visit of the Baby Jesus by Persian royalty, astrologers, who bring with them three precious gifts. There are two very important points revealed in this Gospel text found only in Matthew:

The first to receive a privileged glimpse of the newborn King of the Jews are not Jewish shepherds, but rather, pagan astrologers. Why? Because this King will grow up to become the King of the universe. All people will be invited to join Him in His Kingdom.

The gifts our precious and purposeful: Gold, a gift for royalty; Frankincense, a precious resin used in divine worship; and, Myrrh...burial ointment. What a gift to give a Baby...burial ointment??!! The gift is a prophetic one. It forecasts what will happen to this precious Baby one day. He will lay down His life for all people.

Food for your Journey

In Christ's life there were always a few who made up for the neglect of the crowd. The shepherds did it; their hurrying to the crib atoned for the people who would flee from Christ. The wise men did it; their journey across the world made up for those who refused to stir one hand's breadth from the routine of their lives to go to Christ. Even the gifts the wise men brought have in themselves an obscure recompense and atonement for what would follow later in this Child's life. For they brought gold, the king's emblem, to make up for the crown of thorns that he would wear; they offered incense, the symbol of praise, to make up for the mockery and the spitting; they gave him myrrh, to heal and soothe, and he was wounded from head to foot and no one bathed his wounds. The women at the foot of the cross did it too, making up for the crowd who stood by and sneered. --Dorothy Day, *By Little and By Little: The Selected Writings of Dorothy Day*. (Knopf, 1983), p. 96.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, The Magi travelled many miles on camels to visit and pay homage to You. How spoiled I am! I find difficulty at times to pay homage to You when all I have to do is kneel. Lord, on this feast I promise to do better, to make time in the new year to pause and praise You. Help me, Lord, to remain faithful to You. Amen