



# Daily Reflections

## January 3, 2021

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### Scripture

#### **Matthew 2:1-12**

When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of king Herod, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.

Saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to adore him.

And king Herod hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born.

But they said to him: In Bethlehem of Juda. For so it is written by the prophet:

And thou Bethlehem the land of Juda art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, privately calling the wise men, learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them;

And sending them into Bethlehem, said: Go and diligently inquire after the child, and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come to adore him.

Who having heard the king, went their way; and behold the star which they had seen in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the child was.

And seeing the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And entering into the house, they found the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him; and opening their treasures, they offered him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And having received an answer in sleep that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their country.

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## Our Scripture Reflection

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord and what a wonderful Feast it truly is! Matthew lets us know within the infancy account of his Gospel text that God has a huge and surprising plan for His people. Unlike Luke who has Jewish shepherds as the first to get a glimpse of the newborn King, Mathew has Gentile, pagan astrologers from Persia as the privileged recipients of the first glimpse. Beginning here and over time in his Gospel, Matthew will teach us that God desires salvation for ALL of His people, Jew and Gentile alike.

But there is another message embedded in this beautiful story that will perhaps shock you. The message is revealed within the meaning of the gifts which the Magi bring:

1. Gold-how appropriate for a King
2. Frankincense-it's fragrant aroma is fit for royalty
3. Myrrh-burial ointment!

Oh my! How dare they bring burial ointment to honor a Baby King! But in the Gospel message, Matthew wants us to know that this King's life will end up in a self-giving death for His people. Matthew wants us to enjoy Christmas but to keep one eye opened for Good Friday and Easter.

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## Food for your Journey

Pulitzer prize-winning author Robert Coles is probably the world's most respected child psychologist. In his 1989 book *Harvard Diary*, he relates a conversation with one of the servers in the food line of the Harvard Faculty Club. This server reminds us that the movers and shakers of the world are not always the easiest to serve.

"I see lots of good folk here, kids trying to learn all they can, and teachers trying to teach the best they can; but there's lots of big-shot, stuffed shirt folks here, and boy, do they sell themselves hard, and boy, do they do lots of strutting and conniving, and boy, are they the worst to go near and try to serve."

--Harvard Diary

(New York: Crossroad, 1988), 204.

But Jesus did not go to those who wanted or praised him the most. He went to those who needed him the most. In Luke 10:37, Jesus did not say "Believe thou likewise." Jesus said "Do thou likewise."

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## A Prayer from the Heart

Gracious Father, As I have begun my journey into the new year, I ask that You keep me mindful of my need to live my life in imitation of Your Son, Jesus. He is the King of my heart. May I seek and strive to His way each day despite the cost. Amen