

The Epiphany of the Lord 6 January



About the Epiphany of the Lord

This Solemnity celebrates the wise men who were guided by a star in the East to visit the Christ Child. Herod found out that the wise men were going to visit Jesus and asked them to return and report everything back to him as though they were on a fact-finding mission for him. The Wise Men were warned in a dream to go home by a different way.

These three wise men were pagans or gentiles, but Jesus revealed Himself to them as their King too. **The Jews were the original chosen people, but we as gentiles are God's adopted sons and daughters.** Jesus constantly manifests Himself to us. Not always by a star. However, we must be open to finding Him in the various circumstances of our daily life.

The gifts that the wise men offered the Christ Child - gold, incense and myrrh - remind us that we should offer God our best (gold), pray to Him (incense) and heal our brothers and sisters (myrrh).

In some countries, for example, Italy, today is the day gifts are given. La Befana will come and visit children on this day bearing gifts.

What can we learn from today's Solemnity?

God has blessed us all with gifts and talents as well as various financial resources. We must always be willing to share what we have with others and offer Christ our gifts.

Some people get all caught up in how many wise men there actually were – whether there was **one who brought three gifts, or there were three or maybe even more. The number really doesn't matter.** What does matter is that these men were open to finding the Christ Child and we too must also look for Christ in the world and offer him all that God has generously blessed us with.

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Collect

o God, who on this day
revealed your Only Begotten Son to the nations
by the guidance of a star,
grant in your mercy, that we, who know you already by faith,
may be brought to behold the beauty of your sublime glory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

The visit of the Magi

After Jesus had been born at Bethlehem in Judaea during the reign of King Herod,
some wise men came to Jerusalem from the east.

'Where is the infant king of the Jews?' they asked.

'We saw his star as it rose and have come to do him homage.'

When King Herod heard this he was perturbed,
and so was the whole of Jerusalem.

He called together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people,
and enquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

'At Bethlehem in Judaea,' they told him

'for this is what the prophet wrote:

*And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah,
for out of you will come a leader
who will shepherd my people Israel.'*

Then Herod summoned the wise men to see him privately.

He asked them the exact date on which the star had appeared,
and sent them on to Bethlehem.

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Go and find out all about the child,' he said ' and when you have found him, let me know, so that I too may go and do him homage.'

Having listened to what the king had to say, they set out.

And there in front of them was the star they had seen rising; it went forward, and halted over the place where the child was.

The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage.

Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, and returned to their own country by a different way.

Antiphon

We have seen his star in the East,
and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.

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Hymn for the Solemnity of the Epiphany

These Wise Men came to see Christ
with gifts from Eastern land.
One brought a gift of pure gold,
a gift that was so grand.
We must offer to Jesus,
not gold, but of our best.
To us Christ makes Himself known,
by Him we have been blest.

These Wise Men came to see Christ
with gifts from Eastern land.
One brought myrrh as his off'ring
a gift from desert sand.
We must offer to Jesus,
not myrrh, but all we are.
To us Christ makes Himself known,
He fills us with His power.

These Wise Men came to see Christ
with gifts from Eastern land.
One came with gift of incense,
an offering so grand.
May the prayers that we offer
now rise to God above;
smelling sweet as the incense,
inspired by our love.

With a bright star to guide them
these Wise Men to Christ went.
Bearing gold, myrrh and incense
their gifts they did present.
Closer to Christ we must grow,
proclaiming His Gospel.
Thankfully we bring our gifts
and of His wonders tell.

Text: Chris deSilva and Alessio Loiacono
Tune: Cruger, 76.76D

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