

The Epiphany of the Lord (Year A)

Matthew 2:1-12

'We have come from the east to worship the king.'

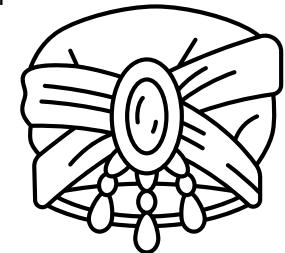
Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.' When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he enquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.' After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Reflection

This passage invites us to reflect on seeking, worship, and humility. The wise men, led by a star, sought to encounter Jesus, reminding us of the importance of pursuing God with open hearts. Unlike Herod who viewed Jesus as a threat, the wise men responded with joy and reverence, offering gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh—symbols of Jesus' kingship, divinity, and sacrifice. Their actions show us that true worship involves humbly offering our best, in honour of God.



Materials needed

- Strips of Paper and pens
- Chalk
- A basket

Activity

- Start by discussing the tradition of "Chalking the Door," at Epiphany where families write symbols and blessings above their doorways as a reminder of their faith.
- Using chalk, you can write the following above the doorframe:
20 + C + M + B + 24
- The numbers represent the current year (2024), and the letters stand for the Latin phrase "Christus Mansionem Benedicat," which means "May Christ bless this house." The letters also represent the names of the Three Wise Men: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar.
- Provide strips of paper for participants to write the same blessing on, so they can take it home and stick it above their own door. Encourage them to be creative in their designs.
- Finish with a closing prayer, thanking God for the gift of Jesus and asking for blessings upon the home and everyone who enters it.

Lord, we thank you for the gift of your Son, Jesus.

As we mark our door with this blessing,
may our home be filled with love, joy, and your presence. Amen.

Call to Action

- Could you gift Epiphany packs of chalk and instructions to other people in the community or local parish?