



Bringing Home the Word

The Epiphany of the Lord (A)

January 4, 2026

A Trip Called Life

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

One way to pray with sacred Scripture is to ask, “How is this biblical story my story?” So, then, how is the story of the Magi our story? Like those journeyers from the East, we may sense there is more to our lives than what is now. Some inner angst can send us on a life search without really knowing where it will take us or even what we are really seeking. Yet, through it all, we are led by an inner star that lures us on. Some might call it a spiritual journey.

Like the Magi who stopped in Jerusalem and asked if anyone knew

something about what they were seeking, we begin asking around. Some people we ask aren’t sure what we are asking, like Herod. Others seem able to offer suggestions, but, for our purposes, these are not answers; they only point the way.

Then, one day, we happen to stumble on what we’ve been looking for all along. Some people call it a religious experience. To describe it to someone else, we might be at a loss for words. Yet, it touches us so deeply that it seems to change our lives. We begin to let go of what we once thought was so important—the gold, frankincense, and myrrh of our lives. And, like the Wise Men, we journey on with our lives, except by a different route, sensing that the path we have traveled thus far is no longer a safe journey home. †

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 60:1–6

Arise! Shine, for your light has come, the glory of the LORD has dawned upon you.

Ephesians 3:2–3a, 5–6

The Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and copartners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Matthew 2:1–12

“Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage.”



How is the story of the Magi our story?

A Word from Pope Leo XIV

Let us resolve to bring [God’s] love everywhere, never forgetting that each of our sisters and brothers is a dwelling place of God and that his presence is manifested above all in the little ones, in the poor and the suffering, who ask us to be thoughtful and compassionate Christians.

REGINA CAELI, ROME, MAY 25, 2025



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- Is anything of the Magi story also your story?
- Have you had a religious experience that changed your life?



Live in the Light

Mark G. Boyer

We three kings of Orient are, / Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, / Following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of night, / Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding, / Guide us to thy perfect light!

“WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE,” VERSE 1

***Isaiah invites the city
to rise up in splendor
because the Lord shines
upon his people again.***

Today’s gospel does not mention “three kings of Orient,” as does the first verse of “We Three Kings of Orient Are.” The passage from Matthew’s Gospel merely states that Magi from the East sought the newborn king of the Jews in order to offer him the three gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Both the carol and the gospel focus on the light that the Magi follow to the “perfect light,” Jesus Christ.

Light is also the topic of the prophet Isaiah. Exhorting the returning Jewish exiles from Babylon not to be depressed by the ruins that had once been Jerusalem and the Temple, Isaiah invites the city to rise up in splendor because light has come—the LORD shines upon his people again. While other peoples (Gentiles) are in darkness, the Jews are bathed in light.

The letter to the Ephesians explains that the Light, Jesus Christ, now shines upon all peoples. Echoing Matthew’s Magi, Paul declares that Gentiles are now coheirs, members of the same body through faith in God’s only begotten Son. While Paul’s new understanding does not upset modern people like it would ancient Jews, some people remain in darkness. They need modern Magi bearing the gift of the Good News that God has chosen all people to be his people. †

From *Caroling Through Advent and Christmas* by Mark G. Boyer (825248). © 2014, Mark G. Boyer. To order, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.

Wisdom from Catholic Update

From “*The Liturgical Year: How Christians Celebrate Time*” by Sandra DeGidio, OSM

The message of Christmas is that God’s only Son was born among us in order to save the world. This is the true meaning of Christmas. It’s unfortunate that, in today’s secular world, the celebration of Christmas does not continue long after December 25. The Church, however, is not so quickly finished with Christmas. In our liturgical calendar, Christmas is over two weeks long. Epiphany comes almost at the end of the Christmas season, twelve days after Christmas. The word epiphany means “a showing, appearance, revelation, manifestation.” Christmas celebrates the Word made flesh, birth of the true Light. Epiphany extols the manifestation of that Light to the whole world in the person of Jesus. With Christ’s Epiphany, God’s covenant with Israel is open to all nations, races, classes, peoples.

Catholic Update—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. For more information, call 800-325-9521 or visit Liguori.org.



Lord Jesus, so that our homes may be havens of peace, our families a source of joy, our children safe, and our elders respected, we pray—Be born in us, be born in our world.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

January 5–10

Monday, St. John Neumann:
1 Jn 3:22–4:6 / Mt 4:12–17, 23–25

Tuesday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 4:7–10 / Mk 6:34–44

Wednesday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 4:11–18 / Mk 6:45–52

Thursday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 4:19–5:4 / Lk 4:14–22a

Friday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 5:5–13 / Lk 5:12–16

Saturday, Christmas Weekday:
1 Jn 5:14–21 / Jn 3:22–30



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