

## Gospel Reflection

### Bethlehem and Beyond, Part 2

This Sunday we hear the story of the magi. These mysterious figures seem to emerge from nowhere, and then disappear without leaving too many clues about who they were or where they came from.

We don't know how many magi came to honor the Christ Child. The Gospel of Matthew simply says, "...magi from the east arrived..." Traditionally, we have thought there were three, probably because of the three gifts that are mentioned – gold, frankincense and myrrh – and their traditional names are Casper, Melchior and Balthasar. Some believe that they were Persian holy men who came from modern day Iran, and Marco Polo claimed to have seen their graves in Tehran.

Neither their number nor their names are really all that important. What is important is that they knew that this was an unprecedented occurrence in the history of the world, and they were willing to travel great distances to do homage to Christ. Once they had seen the child, they returned to their own country, but they could not safely return the same way they had come.

Now that we are leaving Bethlehem behind and speeding off into the new year, are we willing to go out of our way for Christ? Are we willing to change the path that we have been on because of what we have seen or experienced during this Christmas season? Christmas continues to be an unprecedented occurrence. May we, like the magi, have the eyes to see it!

-Elena Cardeña, Faith Formation Director

## KEEPING FAITH FIRST FAMILY FUN

### Matthew 2:1-12

F W L M I J D G D Y Z I X  
L R H S K M L S C O V M V  
D H A R W W Y M E M R K A  
R Z D N L E A R S I H E M  
E I U X K G J D R G T B H  
A K J K I I L J R H S E E  
M G N I K O N E G C A T J  
A Q U J G Q L C R H E H O  
W S K O M U R I E L Q L P  
F I U V R S B O D N D E H  
S I P R I E N J R T S H B  
G I F T S P T O V A S E A  
O P Y W T F R F M A N M Z

**Find these words from the Gospel passage.**

BETHLEHEM	DREAM	EAST
FRANKINCENSE	GIFTS	GOLD
HEROD	ISRAEL	JEWS
JUDAH	KING	MAGI
MYRRH	RULER	SCRIBES

## Disciple's Reflection & Questions of the Week

*The Epiphany of the Lord  
1/6/08*

*Matthew 2:1-12  
Faith-Sharing  
Questions of the Week*



***Our Lady of the Assumption***

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## Call to Prayer

*We begin by calling upon God:*

**In the Name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the  
Holy Spirit, Amen.**

*We then pause for a moment to listen with  
our hearts to this week's Gospel passage...*

**The Word of God:** *Matthew 2:1-12*

### ***The Gospel according to Matthew***

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.

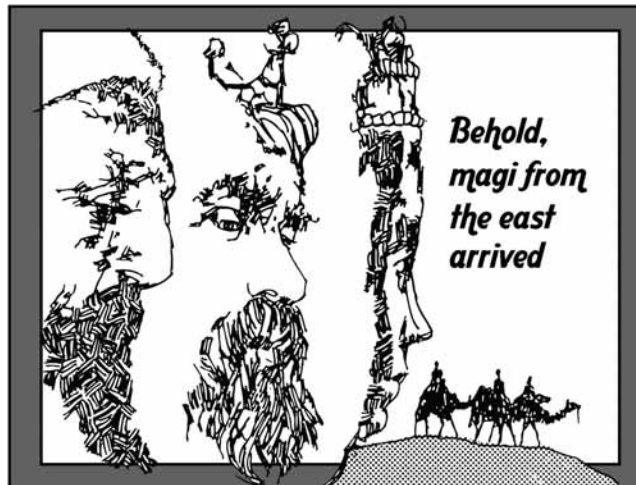
Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since 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.

### ***The Gospel of the Lord***



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### **Gospel Glossary**

**Magi:** astrologers or holy men, perhaps from the area that is now called Iran.

**Ascertained:** learned or determined

**Frankincense:** a fragrant resin used as incense.

**Myrrh:** an aromatic resinous gum that was used in perfume, incense and medicines.

## Faith Sharing

### **Questions of the Week**

- In what ways do I "search diligently" for Christ in my own life?
- When did I last go out of my way to do homage to Christ?
- Is there a new path I am being called to travel because of what I have seen this Christmas?

## Closing Prayer

*Father of light,*

*Today you reveal to people of faith the resplendent fact of the Word made flesh. Your light is strong; your love is near. Draw us beyond the limits which this world imposes to the life where your Spirit makes all life complete. We ask in Jesus' name,*

*Amen.*

**The Epiphany of the Lord**