

**"They fell down and worshiped Jesus"****Reading 1:** Is 60:1-6**Responsorial Psalm:**

Ps 72:1-2,7-8,10-11,12-13

**Reading 2:** Eph 3:2-3a,5-6**Gospel**

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Mt 2:1-12

**Gospel Reading:** Mt 2:1-12

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 Christ 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.

**Meditation:**

If Jesus truly is who he claims to be, the eternal Son of God and Saviour of the world, then why is he not recognized by everyone who hears his word and sees his works? John the Evangelist states that when Jesus came into the world *the world knew him not and his own people received him not* (John 1:10-11). Jesus was born in obscurity. Only the lowly shepherds recognized him at his birth. Some wise men also found their way to Bethlehem to pay homage to the newborn King of Israel. These men were not Israelites, but foreigners. They likely had read and discussed the Messianic prophecies and were anxious to see when this Messianic King would appear. God led them by means of an extraordinary star across the desert to the little town of Bethlehem where Jesus was born. "Note how fitting the order of events was: the wise men saw the star, were received by the Jews and their king; they heard prophecy to explain what had appeared; the angel instructed them; and then they journeyed from Jerusalem to Bethlehem by the guidance of the star. From all this we learn that this was not an ordinary star, for no other star has this capacity to guide, not merely to move but to beckon, to "go before them," drawing and guiding them along their way. The star remained after bringing them to the place, in order that the child might also be seen. For there is nothing conspicuous about the place. The inn was ordinary. The mother was not celebrated or notable. The star was needed to manifest and illumine the lowly place, until they had reached their destination at the manger."

In their thirst for knowledge of God, the wise men from the East willingly left everything, their home and country, in pursuit of that quest. In their diligent search they were led to the source of true knowledge - to Jesus Christ, the Light and Wisdom of God. When they found the newborn King they humbly worshiped him and gave him gifts fitting for a king. The Lord of the universe who revealed the star of Bethlehem to the Gentiles of the East so they could come and worship Jesus, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6) and King of Kings (Revelations 19:16), gives each one of us the same light of revelation to recognize and accept Jesus as our Lord and Saviour. Faith is an entirely free gift that God makes to us. It is through the help of the Holy Spirit, who moves the heart and opens the eyes of the mind that we are able to understand, accept, and believe the truth which God has revealed to us through his Son, Jesus Christ. In faith, the human will and intellect cooperate with grace. "*Believing is an act of the intellect assenting to the divine truth by command of the will moved by God through grace*" (Thomas Aquinas). To know and to encounter Jesus Christ is to know God personally. In the encounter of the wise men with Jesus we see the plan of God to give his only Son as King and Saviour, not just for the Jewish people but for all the nations as well. The Lord Jesus came that both Jew and Gentile might find true and lasting peace with God. Let us pray today that Jew and Gentile alike will find the Lord and Saviour on their journey of life.

**Questions for Community Faith Sharing:**

1. Have you encountered God through things that happened or through your interactions with people in the past week? Share that experience.
2. How can you bring the love of Jesus Christ to those you meet?

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*"Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you for bringing salvation to all the nations. May the gospel of salvation be proclaimed to every nation today and to every person on the face of the earth? Help me to be a good witness of the joy of the gospel to all I meet"*