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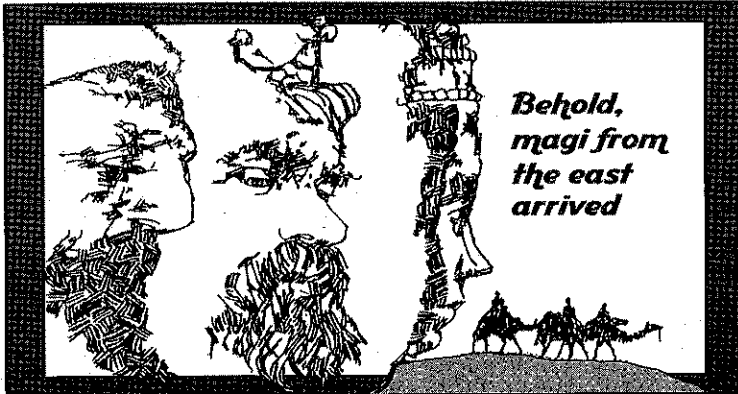
## The Epiphany of the Lord

January 5, 2020

*They opened their treasures  
and offered him gifts  
of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*

— Matthew 2:11b

## The Epiphany of the Lord



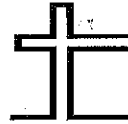
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The story of the Epiphany, or the visitation of the magi, is told only in Matthew. But like many other elements of the Nativity story, we've likely combined this in our mind with Luke's story too. So it's helpful to read this in the context of Matthew's gospel for he makes pertinent theological points. It's easy to read into the story, however, imagining that *three kings* bring the infant Jesus pres-ents. But in reality, the number of magi is not given. We typically imagine three because of the number of gifts they brought. Also, the three are thought of as "kings," even though that word doesn't appear here either. Matthew calls them "magi," which were a class of Zoroastrian priests from Persia (modern-day Iran). And though we likely imagine the infant Jesus, he is called a "child" here (akin to a toddler).

The gifts themselves represent royalty, and the magi represent Gentiles. This tells us that even Gentiles come and wor-ship Jesus, prefiguring the conclusion of the gospel, when the risen Lord will give the commandment to go out to all the nations (Gentiles) teaching them and baptizing them. Finally, the fact that the magi find the child Jesus (rather than the infant) is significant too, as Herod will order the slaughter of the male children based on when the star initially appeared. So it's good for us to read the story carefully, gleaning the theological insights that Matthew means to impart.

This story gives us many points to consider. One might be the fact that Gentiles (considered "the other") come to worship Jesus. Herod needs to ask his advisors about the prophecy when those from Persia (Gentiles) are seeking out the child on their own. We, too, might be open to the other, those who come to the truth and to the person of Jesus on their own accord or by following their own stars. We know that by the end of the gospel, this is Jesus' intention too, that his teachings are not re-stricted to a few, but are open to all. This is the same gospel that will tell us that not everyone who says, "Lord, Lord" will enter the kingdom of heaven. Instead, entry is only for those who do the will of the Father. And the will of the Father is that we act mercifully, much like the magi of the gospel today.

Let us then read the story carefully, with attention to detail. Matthew, the evangelist and theologian, has much to tell us about the great teacher and child -king Jesus.



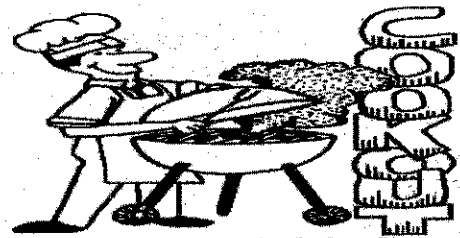
## Sacrificial Giving

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*Many thanks to all our parishioners who support  
the parish faithfully. May God bless your  
generosity.*

Weekend of 12/8	\$2,420.00
Weekend of 12/15	\$3,458.00
Weekend of 12/22	\$2,983.00

**Pray for the Sick of our Parish**, for their health and spiritual consolation, and those who care for them: Alicia, Michael Begany, Denise Bevich, Frances Sullivan Bickel, Kathryn DaRe, Jenny Dornblaser, Theresa M. Fischer, John and Mary Gallagher, Lisa Garcia, Derrick Grover, Michael Herman, Tracy Johns, Laura Huber, Antoinette Kopko Rosemarie Lettko, Catherine Link, Anne Lintner, Helen MacDonald, Stephen Manescu, Matthew McClafferty, Elizabeth Miller, Madonna Miltenberger, Mary Monahan, Dorothy Nele, Minh Nguyen, Bernadette O'Donnell, Yvonne Orlando, Ryan Ostrowski, Charles Pammer, Zennia, Perez, John Rider, Diane Sadler, Samuel Sayesh, Rosemary Scheirer, Dorothea Shunk, Julia and Robert Snyder, Bonita Stortz, Gloria Szczepanski, Kristen Toepfer, Grace



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## Save the Date

You don't have to wait until September for some summer fun. The Activities Committee will be turning our Social Hall into a Picnic Grove on **Saturday, February 29, 2020**. So be sure to mark your calendars and look for more details in the bulletin during the coming weeks!