

Scripture Reading

A Reading of the Gospel According to Matthew (Mt 2:1-4, 7-12) *The Visit of the Magi*

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.

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. Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection ~ Epiphany everyday

First witnesses of Christ's birth from among the Gentiles. The Magi were searching for the new born king of the Jews. They were seeking the Truth. It was so important to them that they travelled long distances from the East, enduring the intense heat, cold and the discomfort of a lengthy journey. They must have taken months to painstakingly prepare their arduous journey: food, water and clothing for the protection from the extremes of the climate of the deserts they would have to cross. The people around them were probably sceptical of what they were doing. To the unenlightened such a journey would be a ridiculous idea, a joke, a foolhardy thing to do. For the Magi, they would need to have unshakeable faith. It would have to be a type of faith that can withstand any ridicule or hardship that would present itself. They would need to have great perseverance that empowered them to travel untiringly long distances, traversing harsh terrain to reach that which they were boldly seeking. It was precisely because of all these qualities of the Magi: great faith, holy boldness, perseverance and purity of the heart in seeking the Truth that God chose them from the Gentile world to bear witness to His Son's birth on earth.

The world is full of Magi. Many people are looking for real peace and happiness. Their hearts are restless. It is a restlessness that St. Augustine said that only God can take away. They are like Magi looking for Jesus although they do not know it is Jesus they must be seeking. For real peace and joy come from Jesus. However, unlike the Magi, most of these restless people are not willing to leave their comfort zone, their 'palaces' in order to search for the Truth. They cling on to their prideful way of thinking and have a tailor-made mold for God. When they find that no one fits their idea of God, they proclaim that God is non-existent. Yet God has promised that He can be found. He can be found in the life of the Truth seeker if sought with sincerity. To the biblical Magi who studied astrology, God was found through the guidance of the stars. *Seek and you will find.* (cf Mt 7:7). Am I a star leading the modern day Magi towards Jesus?

Epiphany everyday. I live in a world that is contrary to my faith. On a daily basis I encounter challenges and trials which test my faith and oftentimes bruise my heart. I need to be strengthened constantly in faith and healed in my heart by the Lord. Whenever I am ready the Lord manifests again and again His great unconditional love for me, whether it be in the daily Mass I attend or in my prayers or Scripture meditation. Do I take my time and open my heart for the Lord to show me His love everyday?

Conversation with Our Lord

Precious Lord, I can never thank You enough for the gift of Yourself to me. May I never take You for granted. Help me to learn a good lesson from the Magi. Let my faith be unshakeable like theirs, and enable me to triumph in all trials and difficulties. May Mother Mary be my guiding star towards Jesus, always encouraging me and strengthening me in my pilgrimage towards heaven my true home. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.

..Seek and You will find. (Matthew 7:7)