

Discussion & Reflection Questions

Epiphany - 4th of January 2026

Read: Matthew 2:1-12

¹ In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’ ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ “And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.” ’

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, ‘Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.’ ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Questions:

1. How do the reactions of Herod, the religious leaders, and the Magi differ – what does that reveal about their motivations & intentions?
2. Matthew highlights that the Magi were guided both by a star & by Scripture (through the chief priests and scribes)? What does this suggest about the way God’s guidance & revelation works for us?
3. The Magi interpret the sign of the star. What signs might we need to interpret?
4. The Magi were “overwhelmed with joy”. How is joy different to happiness or pleasure? Have you felt overwhelmed with joy?
5. The Magi “paid him homage”. How important is it for us to worship Jesus?
6. Do you think there is any significance to the gifts the Magi gave? What gifts can we bring?

7. What might the phrase “they returned to their own country by another road” invite us to reflect on about the things in life we might be called to find another way?

Prayer:

Lord God of the nations,
we have seen the star of your glory rising in splendour:
may the brightness of your incarnate Word
pierce the night that covers the earth,
signal the dawn of justice and peace,
and beckon all nations to walk as one in your light.
We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
in the splendour of eternal light, God for ever and ever. Amen.