

January 8, 2023



Center for Spiritual Development

Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHRISTMAS

Photo by Sr. Karin Nürnberg

AN EXPERIENCE OF HOSPITALITY **The Epiphany of the Lord**

By Sister Christine Hilliard, CSJ

Today's Gospel

After their audience with the king the magi set out. And behold, the star 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.

MATTHEW 2:9-12

Reflection

An Epiphany tradition in some homes includes a party in honor of the visit of

the magi or “three kings” to the Holy Family. A special cake is prepared in which a bean or a coin or, sometimes even a figure representing the baby Christ Child, is hidden. Whoever finds the concealed surprise in their piece of cake is crowned queen or king of the party.

One responsibility of the “monarch” is to lead the blessing of the home for the new year. The numbers of the new year are written over the front door along with the initials of the legendary names of the magi: Casper, Melchior, and Balthasar. (The initials also stand for the Latin phrase, “Christus mansionem benedicat,” asking Christ to bless the house.) The home is dedicated to hospitality which may be seen as both given and received in the Epiphany story. Foreigners were welcomed into the home of Joseph and Mary, and they graciously acknowledged that welcome offering their precious gifts.



Photo of Willow Tree Nativity by Sonya Longbotham

For Pondering

- Does the Epiphany have any significance for you today
- How have you experienced hospitality recently? What was your response to that hospitality?
- In what ways might God be considered hospitable?

- Have you been hospitable to your Creator recently?

For Prayer

Lord God of heaven and earth, you revealed yourself to every nation by the guidance of a star. Bless this house and all who inhabit it. Fill them (us) with the power of your creative light that their (our) concern for others may reflect your all-embracing love. May all who enter with whatever they may bring, experience welcome and gratitude. Amen.

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