

LOOKING TO SUNDAY®

Sunday, January 8, 2017

The Epiphany of the Lord

This email, entitled Looking to Sunday®, focuses on one or more of the scripture readings for the coming Sunday. It prepares readers to hear God's Word at Mass and it offers a point of reflection to consider in the days leading to Sunday. Looking to Sunday is written by Father Tom Iwanowski.

RESTLESS SEEKING

There are various things we can say about the magi who traveled to see the newborn king of the Jews.

The magi were from the East. They were Gentiles. They were educated. They were wealthy. They were self-assured. They studied the stars. They believed in signs. They were not afraid to travel. They were adventurous. They were willing to seek guidance from others. They were treated with respect by those in authority. They were generous in giving gifts.

We can draw those conclusions by reading this Sunday's Gospel for the Solemnity of the Epiphany (Matthew 2:1-12).

But there is another thing we can say about the magi from that Gospel. They were restless, discontented, and looking for something more in their lives.

If they had been satisfied and content with their situation, why would they have been studying the stars and looking for some heavenly sign? Why would they have gone on a quest with no certainty of success and with the high risk of being attacked or robbed, getting lost, or even being killed? Why would they have desired to seek the newborn king of a conquered, insignificant people? Certainly there were far more powerful kings, rulers, and emperors they could have visited?

Obviously, they believed there was something special about this child, something that made him worth searching for.

When they found him, they were "overjoyed" and they presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Gifts that indicated their understanding that they were in the presence of more than just a baby boy staying in a backwater village. This child of no apparent power was of royal stature, worthy of worship, and destined for suffering.

After being in the presence of this newborn king, they returned home. Their quest was over. There was no need to search further. They had found what they were looking for. They were content. They had found the Lord!

We live in a society in which many people seem to be restless and discontented. They have a feeling that something is not quite right or that something is missing.

Some people search for that missing something in the latest philosophy, in another relationship, in another purchase, or in a further promotion.

Others try to numb that gnawing restlessness with drugs, alcohol, pornography, work, sports, entertainment, or by immersing themselves in a digital world.

But that restlessness, that discontent can only be filled by the One for whom the magi searched. For God has made humanity with a restlessness inside its soul that can only be truly satisfied by a relationship with him.

Their discontent, their restlessness, drove the magi into the presence of Jesus. The One who would say, "I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly." (John 10:10).

May we have the sense to do what the magi did, the sense to continually seek out the Lord.

© 2017 Rev. Thomas B. Iwanowski

Best Wishes for a New Year Blessed with God's Presence and Peace!