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FEAST OF THE NATIVITY: WISE MEN STILL SEEK HIM *By HG BISHOP YOUSSEF (SUS DIOCESE)*

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the King, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem saying, “Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East, and are come to worship Him. And, lo, the star, which they saw in the East, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was” (Matthew 2:9). The wise men recognized and understood the meaning of the star. Their wisdom can be characterized as, “the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times” (I Chronicles 12:32). The quest of these wise travelers began with a revelation from God and continued by God’s providence. In wisdom they doffed their worldly concerns and allowed the Heavenly Father to lead them. As Noah, Abraham, Joseph, and Moses before them, they sensed God’s leading and understood... Wisdom is a high degree of knowledge by learned men. The wise use good practical judgment. The wise can make true and right decisions. In the “Fraction of St. Epiphanius” we are told:



Wisdom is brighter than the sun and all the stars. Wisdom is the light of the Father, existing with Him from eternity. Wisdom has existed from eternity; she renews everyone. She enters the souls of the righteous through all ages. Wisdom is more precious than pearls, and unequal to all honors. Wisdom has counsel, might, and knowledge. By wisdom kings reign, the great men are honored. And the princes of the earth govern! Wisdom loves those who love her and protects those who keep her. Those who seek wisdom find grace! Wisdom walks in the way of justice, and moves in the path of truth. Wisdom grants richness to those who acknowledge her, and fills their treasures with joy.

We can tell why the wise men were considered truly “wise” men by contemplating on the lessons their examples teach us. First, they followed the star sensing God’s leading. Isaiah 2:3 plainly states, “And He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths.” With the Glorious Feast of the Nativity renew your commitment to allow God to direct your life.

As “wise” men they responded in faith. The faith of the wise men was an active one. They responded to the will of God. One can only imagine what hardships and uncertainty they faced traveling to pay homage to the newborn Lord Jesus Christ. One thing is certain though; God was not secondary in their life. The Magi is symbolic of the Church whose membership is determined by faith, not ethnic ancestry. An active faith, such as that of the wise men, will always place God and the Church first and foremost in your life. The wise men never lost sight of what they were seeking. They were informed that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. They trusted and obeyed the Divine Inspiration they had received. We also must obey the Word of God found in the Bible. We, as the wise men, through obedience will find the true “Bright and Morning Star”. The wisdom of the wise men sent them searching for the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Gifts prophetic of a life to come were given to our Lord and Savior. Gifts befitting more than an ordinary king were presented. Do we offer the Lord Jesus Christ our best gifts as the Magi did?

In contemplation of the approaching Glorious Feast of the Nativity let each of us follow in the example of the wise men and allow the Lord Jesus Christ to direct our way. Ask for faith that you might see the path of God. Follow where the Lord leads you. Trust and obey His Instructions. Humbly pray that as you travel life’s journey, you will worship as the wise men. Kneel before the infant Child. Experience true joy in “the Wisdom of God” (I Corinthians 1:24). Ask for insight and wisdom as each day unfolds. His is the greatest and most challenging Mystery from first to last. Perhaps this is why “wise” men still seek Him.

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