

Epiphany 2016

The Light of the World

If you look at our Christmas crèche closely, you will notice that the three kings have moved. We originally placed them far from the crèche because they were still on their journey, following the star to Bethlehem. But today, on this beautiful feast of the Epiphany, their journey has ended, and we now find them at the crèche, worshipping the Christ child, the light of the world. Having been guided by a light of that star, they now stand in the radiant light of Christ, the true light of the world.

Perhaps it is difficult for us to understand why these three men followed a star to worship a king they did not know. What assurance did they have that the star would lead them to a newborn king? What if they were wrong? What if they had miscalculated? And when finally they completed their journey, the star did not settle over the palace of a king but over a manger, where they found Mary and Joseph with their newborn child. Was *this* the goal and purpose of their journey? Did the star direct them to the right place?

While we might ask these kinds of questions, the wise men did not. Because they had been guided by God's grace from the outset of their journey, they knew that the light of this star had brought them to the right place, to the right child. And so in deep faith and without question, they bowed in worship before the child and

offered him gifts of *gold* to acknowledge his kingship, *frankincense* to confess his divinity, and *myrrh* to proclaim his humanity. Although they did not know what this child would be, they understood that God was at work in him. They understood that through this child God would bring salvation to all the people.

We hear no more about the wise men. We do not know what happened to them when they returned home. But it seems to me that their lives must have been forever changed; for, having seen the true light of the world, they could never see the world in the same way again. Having worshipped the very Son of God, they surely told others of their experience. Having seen the first rays of God's salvation, they now lived their lives with the assurance that no matter what happened all would be well.

Today, on this wondrous feast of the Epiphany we stand in the radiant light of the savior. Like the Magi, we worship in the light of Christ, the light of the world. And because we dwell in the light that is Christ, we live in the presence of God who is light, and in whom there is no darkness. On this day we are bathed in the glorious light of God because we stand in the radiant light of Christ. So let us walk as children of the light.

As you kneel before the Christmas crèche today and look at the Magi, *worship* with them, *rejoice* with them, and *proclaim* to the world that Jesus Christ is the true light of the world, and in him there is no darkness.