

## Commentary on the Gospel for Sun, Jan 6th 2019

### The Epiphany of the Lord

The folks with Habitat for Humanity used to put on an elaborate living Nativity in a field in my area when I was growing up. Upon arrival, guests would be assigned a family name and told where to report for the census. Tour guides dressed as shepherds led groups along the path where they met Mary, Joseph, and their real donkey on their way to Bethlehem; heard the angels sing “Gloria” (including my school choir one year); went through the census tent with the Roman soldiers; shopped at a middle-Eastern bazaar; and ran into King Herod and the three magi. There was always a bit of audience participation at that point. The magi would ask the children in the group whether we thought they should come back and tell Herod when they found Jesus. We, knowing the story, would reply, “No no, don’t tell him! He wants to hurt Jesus!” The magi always trusted us, and we would see them again (or at least three people in the same costumes) at the end of the journey in the stable.

I wonder what it was like for those three to see the star, to know its true meaning, and to follow the light. They must have been trusting people, to believe that the sign in the sky meant what they hoped it meant, and to believe that what it meant was worth the risk of the long trip. They trusted the light. And then, I imagine, they were “radiant at what [they saw]” as they brought the wealth of nations to the Christ child.

Where do we see a glimmer of light this Christmas season? Are we courageous enough to believe in the hope it brings? What gifts do we bring into that hope?

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