

Courage to Follow a Star

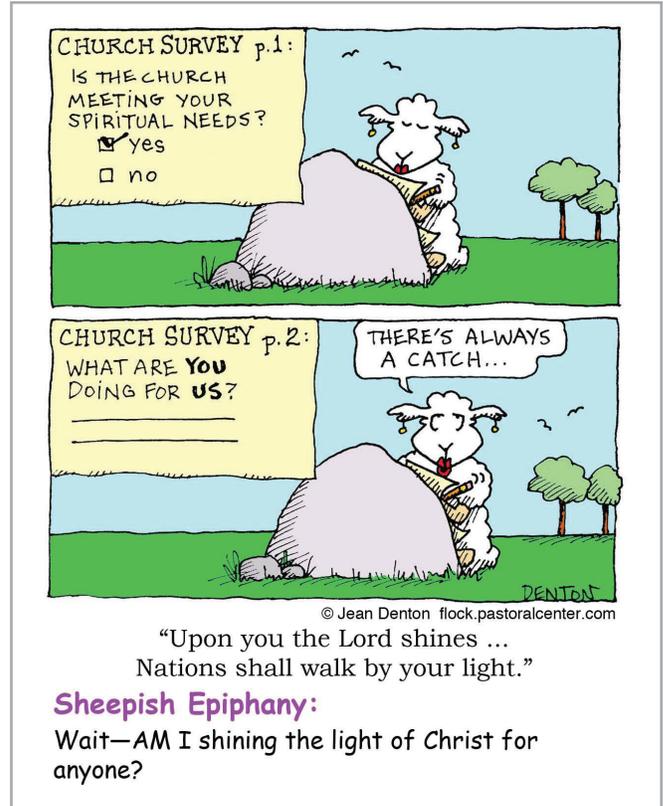
This Week's Readings at Mass

- ▶ Isaiah 60:1-6 - Glory of the new Zion
- ▶ Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6 - Commission to preach God's plan
- ▶ Matthew 2:1-12 - The visit of the Magi

The Feast of the Epiphany brings the Christmas season to a close as the Magi visit the infant Jesus. "Epiphany" is a Greek word meaning a "showing" or "manifestation." In this context it refers to the public recognition of Jesus as the newborn king of the Jews.

Not much is known about the Magi: their names, their country of origin, or even how many there were is never mentioned in the Bible. So who were they? In Jesus' time, the term Magi referred to a caste of Persian priests. They were astrologers who looked to the stars as guides. We don't know their place of origin, except that it was from somewhere east of the Holy Land, perhaps Arabia or the Syrian desert because of the gifts they brought.

Whoever they were, the mysterious people who came to worship Jesus were pagan foreigners. They would have been well-educated and wealthy. They were also seekers, willing to give up the comforts of their daily lives for a long journey to an unknown destination. They were courageous enough to seek an audience with the feared tyrant, King Herod. Clearly, something very powerful was drawing them, and they trusted that they were being led. Later, they trusted their dreams that they should not return to Herod and returned to their homes by a different route. We can only wonder how their lives



were changed by the baby and the Holy Family they met.

Questions of the Week

- 1 What new thing(s) did the scriptures reveal to you this Christmas season about who Jesus is in your life or whom he wants to be for you?
- 2 In what ways are you called to be like the Magi, courageous and trusting although you may not know where you are being led?

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