

## Epiphany - 2022

### **"Because you never know what's going to happen next!"**

A survey was made among school children asking the question why they enjoyed reading Harry Potter novels and watching Harry Potter movies. The most common answer was, "Because you never know what's going to happen next!"

The same element of suspense and discovery marked the journey of the Magi, who never knew what road the Spirit was going to take them down next.

Half a billion people all around the world watched with suspense and were thrilled when men, three astronauts in Apollo 8, landed for the first time on the moon (July 20th, 1969).

When pilots Dick Rutan and Jeana Yeager made their historic flight in 1986 with their spindly Voyager aircraft, the whole world followed it with excitement. For nine days a sky-watch was kept tracking the first non-stop global flight without refueling.

The same elements of suspense and discovery were there when Marco Polo journeyed to India and China, when Christopher Columbus travelled to America, and when Admiral Byrd went to the South Pole.

Such adventurers have always aroused our admiration and curiosity. — The magi-astrologers described in today's Gospel had to be a little crazy leaving the security of their homeland to venture forth into a strange country presided over by a mad king like Herod, in search of a Divine Child.

But their great Faith, curiosity, and adventurous spirit enabled them to discover the secret of the whole universe - the secret of God's incredible love for His people - because the Child they found was no ordinary child, but the very Son of God become man.

Today's readings invite us to have the curiosity of the school students and the Faith and adventurous spirit of the magi so that we may experience the "epiphany" of our God in everyone and every event, everywhere. (adapted from *Albert Cylwicki in His Word Resounds*). (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>)

### **The triple reactions:**

The Epiphany can be looked on as a symbol for our pilgrimage through life to Christ. The feast invites us to see ourselves in the Magi - a people on a journey to Christ. Today's Gospel also tells us the story of the encounter of the Magi with the evil King Herod. This encounter demonstrates three reactions to Jesus' birth, a) Hatred: a group of people headed by Herod planned to destroy Jesus; b) Indifference: another group, composed of priests and scribes, ignored Jesus; c) Adoration: the members of a third group — shepherds and the magi — adored Jesus and offered themselves to Him.

### **Artaban the fourth Wise Man:**

In 1895, Henry van Dyke wrote the story, "The Other Wise Man," telling of a fourth wise man called Artaban. Our hero is not mentioned in the Gospel because he missed the caravan. He got to Bethlehem too late to see the Baby Jesus.

But Artaban did make it in time, using one of his gifts for the newborn King to save one of the Holy Innocents by bribing a soldier. For 33 years Artaban searched for Jesus. He did not find Jesus, but in the meantime, the Fourth wise man used the precious gifts he had brought for the King to feed the hungry and help the poor.

Then one day in Jerusalem Artaban saw the "King of the Jews" being crucified. He started to offer his last gift for the King, a great pearl, to the soldiers as ransom for Him. But then he saw a girl being sold into slavery to pay family debts. Artaban gave his pearl to buy freedom for the girl.

Suddenly the earth quaked as Jesus died on the cross and a stone struck Artaban. Dying, he heard a Voice saying: "When you helped the least of my children, you helped me. Meet me in Heaven!"

— Artaban, the fourth Wise Man, had been making God present in his community for years by helping others. God asks each of us on the feast of Epiphany to be a fourth Wise Man by becoming God's epiphanies, making His love present in the world around us by our acts of love and kindness. (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>) L/22