



Recently some Christian scientists got to work trying to explain the star that led the wise men to Bethlehem. They came up with a complicated, and no doubt plausible, astronomical theory about how a certain brilliant star may have appeared around the time of the birth of Jesus. Though I was intrigued by their methods, I wondered why they bothered. Matthew's wandering star is not

about astronomy. It's religious shorthand for describing how the heavens preside over and guide the events of the world. The image of a star is used in similar ways in the Books of Deuteronomy, Numbers, Isaiah and the Psalms. This entire feast is all about symbols, not science. Reported by Hippolytus as early as the third century, it is celebrated twelve days after Christmas, the number itself echoing God's goodness in creating and recreating us.

The wise men's star is on a par with the other images Matthew uses. At the centre of each of the first three chapters of his Gospel there is an extraordinary event. In chapter one Joseph hears the message of an angel in a dream. In chapter two the wise men find Jesus by following a star. And by chapter three the heavens open and God speaks at the baptism of the Lord. By any standards that's quite an opening to a biography! It's all about the manifestation, or epiphany, of God's glory in the world.

And let's look carefully at where and for whom this glory is revealed. The first instance is to Joseph while he's in bed asleep. The second is to gentile astrologers who, by reporting their news to Herod, set up an immediate threat to Jesus. The third instance is to all those Jews who were coming to hear John the Baptist. Within three chapters of Matthew's Gospel the circles of God's glory revealed in Jesus become more public and change lives. The lives of Joseph, the star gazers, John the Baptist and those who heard Jesus preach will never be the same again.

The Feast of the Epiphany is not an ancient version of Halley's comet. It is about how God's glory changes human hearts. T.S. Eliot got this point in his poem 'The journey of the Magi'.

'Birth or death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods. I should be glad of another death.'

And so may this feast change our hearts and enable us to die to self so as to be born to God's glory that can and does shine through us. And may we remember that this epiphany is not meant for us alone, but that we are called to go public with it and demonstrate our belief in today's feast by the way we live, the world we help create, and the one we strive to recreate.

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Bookings for Sunday Mass essential – No Need to book for Weekday Masses

St. Joseph the Worker Church
44 Imperial Parade, Labrador

Sunday Masses
7:00am & 8:30am
(Please book on line)

Weekday Masses
Monday & Wednesday
7:00am
**(No need to book for weekday
Mass)**

Gold Coast University Hospital
Friday Rosary 10.00am
Mass Friday 10:30am

Guardian Angels' Church
99 Scarborough St., Southport

Saturday & Sunday Masses
RECONCILIATION : 4.30pm
Saturday (Vigil) 5.30 pm
Sunday 7:00am & 9:00am
(Please book on line)

Prayers & Adoration
Wednesday 12.00noon –1.00pm

Weekday Mass
Friday 12:30pm

(No need to book for weekday Mass)

Mary Immaculate Church
31 Edmund Rice Drive, Ashmore

Saturday & Sunday Masses
Saturday (Vigil) 4.30pm
Sunday 9:00am & 5.30pm including
the Korean Mass
(Please book on line)

Weekday Masses
Tuesday 9:00am
Thursday 9:00am
No need to book for weekday Mass

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
Guardian Angles Church 4.30pm

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

We Three Kings

We three Kings of Orient are,
bearing gifts we traverse afar
field and fountain,
moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

Refrain:

**O, Star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading,
still proceeding,
guide us to the perfect
Light.**



Born a King on
Bethlehem's plain,
gold I bring to crown him again.
King for ever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign. **R**

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GLORY TO GOD Mass of St Francis

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory.
Lord God, heavenly King, O God,
almighty Father.
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
You take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us
You take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
You are seated at the right hand
of the Father,
have mercy on us.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
You alone are the most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the
Father.
Amen. Amen.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Sing to the Mountains (sung)

Refrain:

**Sing to the mountains,
sing to the sea,
raise your voices, lift your hearts.
This is the day the Lord has made.
Let all the earth rejoice.**

I will give thanks to you, my Lord,
you have answered my plea.
You have saved my soul from death, you
are my strength and my song. **R**

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. **R**

This is the day that the Lord has made,
let us be glad and rejoice.
He has turned all death to life,
sing of the glory of God. **R**
Bob Dufford ©1975 OCP

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION

Save us, Saviour of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection you
have set us free.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia!

You are the Christ everlasting,
born for us all of a virgin,
you have conquered death,
opened heaven to all believers.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia!

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COMMUNION PROCESSION

The First Noel

The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds
in fields as they lay,
in fields where they lay
keeping their sheep
on a cold winter's night
that was so deep.

Refrain:

Noel Noel Noel Noel!

Born is the King of Israel!

They looked up and saw a star
shining in the East beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued
both day and night. **R**

And by the light of that same star
three wise men came
from country far,
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star
where ever it went. **R**

This star drew nigh
to the north-west,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place
where Jesus lay. **R**

Then entered in
those wise men three
and reverently upon their knee,
they offered there in His presence
their gold and myrrh
and frankincense. **R**

Now let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
who made both heav'n and earth
from nought, and with his blood
salvation bought. **R**
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REFLECTION HYMN

Song for Epiphany

Behold a star shining
upon a Child's head,
and low bending shepherds
by God's angels led.
Three kings all their treasures
before him unfold,
the fragrance of spices,
frankincense and gold.

The incense his Godhead,
God's kingship proclaims,
the myrrh's bitter sweetness
His cross and His pains.
What have we to give thee
but what thou first gave?
Take, Jesus, our homage
and all that we have.

Our faith as the incense
be pleasant to thee,
the myrrh speak our hoping,
the gold charity.
So Jesus and Mary and Joseph, farewell,
may angels surround you
and God keep you well.

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Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous
strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!



Shepherds, why this Jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song? **R**

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing.
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. **R**
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(SUNG)

Holy God We Praise thy Name

Holy God, we praise thy name!
Lord of all, we bow before thee;
all on earth thy sceptre claim,
all in heaven above adore thee;
infinite thy vast domain,
everlasting is your reign.

Hark the loud celestial hymn
angel choirs above are raising;
Cherubim and Seraphim
in unceasing chorus praising,
fill the heavens with sweet accord:
Holy, holy, holy Lord!

Holy Father, Holy Son,
Holy Spirit, three we name thee,
while in essence only One,
undivided God we claim thee,
and adoring bend the knee,
while we own the mystery.

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