

The Epiphany of the Lord



God, the Creator of Life, must be sought with a humble willingness if we are to have a chance at recovery from the bondage of addictions, compulsions, and unhealthy attachments. At a certain point, we must admit that we were powerless over substances and/or behaviors and that only by an act of God can we be saved. In terms of our Catholic faith, we know Jesus as more than just an abstract figure.

As we celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord this Sunday, we are reminded of the spiritual quest that we have been sent out upon. Having been familiar with Jewish scripture at the time—particularly the writing of Isaiah—magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem asking about the revelation of the Lord.

Knowing there was more to this spiritual experience they were undergoing, the magi sought further direction on where to go and where the Messiah was to be born. While their own calculations and intuitions got them to Jerusalem, experts in revelation and religion gave more specific details on where to find the savior.

From Matthew's Gospel, we hear the remainder of this story:

*Then Herod called the magi secretly
and ascertained from them the time of the star's
appearance.
He sent them to Bethlehem and said,
"Go and search diligently for the child.
When you have found him, bring me word,
that I too may go and do him homage."
After their audience with the king they set out.
And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising
preceded them,
until it came and stopped over the place where the
child was.
They were overjoyed at seeing the star,
and on entering the house
they saw the child with Mary his mother.
They prostrated themselves and did him homage.
Then they opened their treasures
and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and
myrrh.
And having been warned in a dream not to return to
Herod,
they departed for their country by another way.*

Our own recovery, in some order, takes similar shape. Having spent time navigating the waters of addiction, compulsions, and unhealthy attachments with our own compass, we are now given opportunities to follow the Light that guides us. We don't always know why or how, but some set of circumstances and inspiration moves us in the direction of God.

We are not alone. Our own resources can only get us so far, but others along the path will provide more detailed guidance once we start moving. Mentors and sponsors from our recovery fellowships play a vital role in sharing experience, strength, and hope while guiding us through the Twelve Steps. Therapists, psychiatrists, and spiritual directors can be a valuable resource as we dig deeper into emotional, mental, and spiritual health. Friendships centered around Christ and recovery add an abundance of joy and keep us in the middle of the herd.

God, who is active in our lives, will provide further direction as we begin or deepen our journey toward freedom. We must remain consistent and patient in our prayer lives and take real action to learn from the experience of others. Like the magi, the course of our lives will change upon coming to know Jesus Christ.

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- What kind of support do you find from the Church and your local community in order to further your recovery journey?
- How have friends, mentors, sponsors, spiritual directors, and therapists impacted your life in recovery?
- Is there something you have been reflecting on which requires action in the new year?

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:]fst Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13

GYW]bnd Reading: Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12