

Feast of the Epiphany – January 3, 2016

“Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem...” The story is so familiar. Every year the Magi ride into our lives. In the unlikely case you decide to imitate the magi by riding a camel, check out the [WikiHow.com](http://www.wikihow.com) site. It says, “Sit and hold the reins confidently. Camels can sense when a person is uncomfortable. By doing this, you’ll make the camel feel more relaxed instead of wanting to go on a rampage.” Now doesn’t, that tidbit of information just make your day? It’s like a fairytale conclusion to the Christmas season.

More seriously, (I hope) follow me on a ride of a different sort. The gospel for the feast of the Epiphany shows a scene in which everything is in motion, and in which there is plenty of darkness. As the story goes, the Holy Family has journeyed from Nazareth to Bethlehem. They will soon pack their bags again and flee to Egypt.

Meanwhile the magi are on the move from the East, led into Jerusalem and then on to Bethlehem by the shimmering light of a pilgrim star. They will journey back to their own country, this time led by the light of a dream. The Holy Family. The Magi. Pilgrims all. Nomads, everyone. Both seeking light and bearing light.

In our own wanderings, where do we seek the light of Christ? To what stars do we turn for guidance?

St. Benedict, along with a host of star-gazing saints on our Catholic calendars, tell us that Christ is found more particularly in poor people and pilgrims. This is not where we might normally turn to find a guiding star that shines with royal beauty bright. Can poor people and pilgrims guide us to the place where the Christ child lies?

Each year, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops designates the week that begins on epiphany as National Migration Week. As nomads on this earth, we are part of this family of migrants – a pilgrim people, immigrants all, each person a star in a constellation traversing the earth, each person shining with royal beauty bright.

As we travel in this human family, may we not be so enflamed by our own brightness, our own pride, that we cannot see the royal beauty of those with whom we journey, all bearers of the shining light of Christ.

May we be humble. May we be wise. May we journey as one constellation, one family of God, traveling as stars of wonder, both bearing light and seeking light, helping one another to the perfect Light.

And remember to hold the reins confidently.