



Advent Week 4

Day 26, Thursday, December 23rd

"After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route."

Matthew 2:9-12

Such familiar words! Wise men from afar finally found the little family, worshiped Jesus and presented gifts. I would have taken diapers and blankets plus a casserole for the parents, but I would have been wrong. These travelers were spot on with their gifts. Gold would provide for that refugee family for two years. Frankincense would repel desert insects from tender infant skin. Myrrh would serve as baby oil keeping Jesus clean and comfortable.

Practical gifts, but also gifts with the messages we sing of every year. Gold denotes majesty - this child was born King of the Jews. Priests used incense to worship God - this child was God come down to earth, and now is seated in Heaven. Myrrh was used to prepare bodies for burial - this child, both King and God, was born to die - and to rise!

The Magi wouldn't fully understand what those gifts meant, but gave them anyway. and they and their gifts were welcomed and accepted.

This was how God showed the world that all are welcome, no matter our age, gender, or race, no matter what we have been, have believed, or have done in the past, Jesus came for all, and wants all of us to come to him.

REFLECT: Have you let the words and promises of Jesus settle into your heart? If not, how can you do this?

PRAY: Loving God, you know me and accept me, just as you knew and accepted the Magi who worshiped Jesus. May that knowledge so thrill me, that I make time to worship you daily, giving you the gifts of my love and my life - even when I don't fully understand what that may mean. I ask this in Jesus' name, Amen.

