

Meditation on the Gifts of the Magi

Fr. Thomas Hopko

The gifts of the Magi are of particular significance. They are interpreted symbolically in the liturgy of the feast. **The gift of gold** is taken as the sign that Jesus is the king of Israel, of the entire universe, and of the kingdom of God to come. This is a crucial part of the Christmas story in the gospels. It caused Herod to kill all the "male children in Bethlehem and in all the region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men" (Mt 2:16).

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The gift of frankincense is taken by the liturgy to signify the fact that Jesus is God, since incense is for worship, and only God may be worshipped.

And **the gift of myrrh** is for the Lord Jesus who has come to die as the perfect sacrifice for the people. For the dead were anointed with myrrh, as Jesus Himself was anointed, according to the scriptures, at the time of His death (Jn 19:39-40).

In the gifts of the Magi, therefore, are contained all the mysteries of Christ's coming. They point out the purpose of His appearance on earth. He is the royal king, the Son of David, whose kingdom will have no end. He is the victim, the Lamb of God, who by His death takes away the sins of the world. And He is God Himself, the divine Son of the Father: "Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven..." as the Nicene Creed declares.

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Bulletin submissions may be sent to Kh. Patty K. at perelandracbc@yahoo.com (no spaces) by Wednesday preceding the Sunday on which the announcement will appear.



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Saturday, December 24 — Eve of Our Lord's Nativity

Martyr Eugenia of Rome and companions; Martyrs Achaikos and Basillia; Martyr Ahmed of Constantinople

Baptism of Andrew Patrick Gill, 10:00 AM

Followed by the Vesperal Divine Liturgy of St. Basil the Great

Prokeimenon: Psalm 2

The Lord said unto Me: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.

Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance.

Epistle: Hebrews 1:1–12 • Gospel: Luke 2:1–20 (Eve of the Nativity)

Megalynarion from the Liturgy of St. Basil

All of creation rejoices in thee, O full of grace: the assembly of angels and the race of men. O sanctified temple and spiritual paradise, the glory of virgins, from whom God was incarnate and became a Child, our God before the ages. He made thy body into a throne, and thy womb He made more spacious than the Heavens. All of creation rejoices in thee! O full of grace, glory to thee!

A Note to Visitors and Guests: Welcome! We are glad you have joined us today for worship! If this is your first visit to All Saints, please take a moment to fill out a visitor's card at the greeter's stand before you leave. The greeter also has Liturgy Books for use during the service, if you desire one. We hope you will join us for brunch and Sunday School following this morning's service.

Epistle Reader: Dennis L. (Hebrews 1:1–12)
Prospora: Pat or Laurel R.

Greeter: Volunteer
Flowers: Church, for the Nativity

Sunday, December 25 — Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Matins and Divine Liturgy beginning Saturday night at 11:00 PM

Matins Gospel Reading: Matthew 1:18–25

Troparion of the Nativity (Carpatho-Russian Tone 4)

Thy nativity, O Christ our God, has shown to the world the light of knowledge, for by it those who worshipped the stars were taught by a star to adore Thee, the Sun of Righteousness, and to know Thee, the Orient from on High. O Lord, glory to Thee!

Kontakion of the Nativity (Tone 3)

Today the Virgin giveth birth to the Transcendent in essence. The earth offereth the cave to the unapproachable One; the angels with the shepherds glorify Him; and the Magi with the star travel on their way: for a new Child hath been born for our sakes, God before the ages.

Prokeimenon: Psalm 65

*Let all the earth worship Thee and sing unto Thee; let them sing unto Thy Name.
Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing forth the honor of His Name, make His praise glorious!*

Epistle: Galatians 4:4–7 • Gospel: Matthew 2:1–12

Megalynarion:

O my soul, magnify her who is more honorable and is more exalted in glory than the Heavenly hosts. I behold a strange and wonderful mystery: the cave a Heaven, the Virgin a cherubic throne, and the manger a noble place in which hath lain Christ the uncontained God. Let us, therefore, praise and magnify Him.

Koinonikon:

The Lord hath sent redemption to his people. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Epistle Reader: Bill R. (Gal. 4:4-7)
Prospora: Julie V.

Greeter: Pat K.
Flowers: Church

This Week at All Saints

Tuesday, Dec. 27: Teen SOYO soup kitchen service, St. Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Church, 3-5:00 PM.

Wednesday, Dec. 28: **Vespers**, 7:30 PM

Saturday, Dec. 31: **Vespers**, 7:30 PM

- *There will be **NO midnight liturgy** this year for New Year's Eve.*

Next Sunday, January 1 — Circumcision of our Lord, St. Basil the Great

Epistle Reader: Polycarp G. (Colossians 2:8–12)

Brunch: KL-RH

Prospora: Eva W.

Coffee: Polycarp and Gosia G.

Flowers: Church

Clean-up Captain: Nancy L.

Greeter: Bill R.

- *Annual open house at the Walters' home, Jan. 1 at 4:00 PM*
- *No Wednesday Vespers this week.*

Thursday, January 5 — Vespers Liturgy for Theophany, 7:00 PM

Epistle Reader: Jim K. (Titus 2:11–14, 3:4–7)

Prospora: Miriam W.

Flowers: Church

- *The **Blessing of the Waters** will follow liturgy.*

News and Upcoming Events

There has been a noticeable shortage of food at coffee hour over the past few weeks. Please be mindful of the brunch rotation and bring something to eat on your household's appointed day. If you are unable, please do your best to switch dates with someone else. **Kh. Patty will be slightly adjusting the brunch groups (effective in January) to distribute our families more evenly in order to avoid a shortage of food.** Most people will remain in the same group, but please check to see where you fall! *Thank you. —Fr. Andrew*