

**The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John Carlos,  
Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ, January 5,  
2020**

FOLLOWING THE STAR



The feast of the Epiphany constitutes the coming to know Jesus Christ through the gifts that are presented to the Child by the three kings. Each of the gifts reveal a specific characteristic of the Savior. But, the Magi also reveal a significant characteristic about humanity, they reveal the desire within the human heart to seek their creator: God!

“The Magi mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew are a living witness to the fact that the seeds of truth are present everywhere, for they are the gift of the Creator, who calls all people to acknowledge him as good and

faithful Father. The Magi represent the men and woman throughout the world who are welcomed into the house of God. Before Jesus, all divisions of race, language and culture disappear: in that Child, all humanity discovers its unity. The Church has the task of seeing and showing ever more clearly the desire for God which is present in the heart of every man and woman. This is the service of the Church, with the light that she reflects: to draw out the desire for God present in every heart. Like the Magi, countless people, in our own day, have a “restless heart” which continues to seek without finding sure answers – it is the restlessness of the Holy Spirit that stirs in hearts. They too are looking for a star to show them the path to Bethlehem.

How many stars there are in the sky! And yet the Magi followed a new and different star, which for them shone all the more brightly. They had long peered into the great book of the heavens, seeking an answer to their questions – they had restless hearts –, and at long last the light appeared. That star changed them. It made them leave their daily concerns behind and set out immediately on a journey. They listened to a voice deep within, which led them to follow that light. It was the voice of the Holy Spirit, who works in all people. The star guided them, until they found the King of the Jews in a humble dwelling in Bethlehem.” (from Pope Francis homily on Epiphany 2016)

We do well to repeat the question asked by the Magi: “Where is the child who has been born the King of

the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage” (Mt 2:2). We are impelled, especially in an age like our own, to seek the signs which God offers us, realizing that great effort is needed to interpret them and thus to understand his will.

May this year bring us renew hope, filled with God’s grace.

Father John Carlos