

The Three Wise Men – seekers of truth guided by wisdom



The journey of the Wise Men

The Three Wise Men, also known as the Magi, appear in the Gospel of Matthew (Matthew 2:1-12). They came from the East after observing an extraordinary star that they understood to be the sign of the birth of a great king.

Tradition remembers them as **Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar**, although the Bible does not mention their names. They are often regarded as wise men, scholars, or royal advisers who devoted themselves to studying the signs of the times and seeking truth.

Their journey required determination, patience, and courage. They left the security of their homes and travelled a great distance because they believed that the star was leading them towards something of great importance.

A search for truth

The Wise Men were not content with limited knowledge. When they saw the star, they did not ignore it. Instead, they sought its meaning.

Their example teaches an important lesson: wisdom begins with the desire to learn and the humility to recognise that we do not know everything.

When they arrived in Jerusalem, they asked:

“Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews?” (Matthew 2:2)

They were willing to ask questions, seek guidance, and continue their search until they found the truth.

Wisdom joined to humility

Eventually, the star led them to Bethlehem, where they found the child Jesus with Mary, his mother.

Although they were respected and learned men, they did not place themselves above others. Instead, they knelt before the child and paid him homage.

They presented gifts of great value:

- **Gold**, symbolising kingship.

- **Frankincense**, symbolising divinity and worship.
- **Myrrh**, pointing towards sacrifice and suffering.

Their actions demonstrate that true wisdom is accompanied by humility. The wisest people recognise something greater than themselves and are willing to follow the truth wherever it leads.

Wisdom and right judgement

After visiting Jesus, the Wise Men received a warning in a dream not to return to King Herod. Herod had asked them to report the child's location, claiming that he wished to worship him. In reality, he intended to eliminate a rival to his power.

The Wise Men discerned the danger and acted accordingly. Instead of returning to Herod, they chose another route home.

This decision showed not only wisdom but also moral responsibility. They understood that knowledge carries responsibility and that wise decisions must serve what is right and just.

Why are the Wise Men remembered?

The Three Wise Men are remembered because they sought truth with perseverance, recognised it when they found it, and acted upon it.

They combined knowledge with humility, discernment with courage, and wisdom with responsibility.

Their journey reminds us that wisdom is not merely possessing information. Wisdom is the ability to recognise what is true and good and to act accordingly.

What can we learn from the Three Wise Men?

The Wise Men remain important role models, especially for military personnel and leaders entrusted with responsibility.

Their example reminds us that:

- Wisdom begins with the willingness to seek truth.
- Good judgement requires careful observation and discernment.
- Humility is essential for wise leadership.
- Knowledge carries responsibility.
- Right decisions should be guided by truth and moral principles.

Military personnel often face complex situations that require sound judgement. Information alone is not enough. Wise leaders must assess circumstances carefully, recognise risks, and choose the course of action that best serves the mission and the common good.

The Three Wise Men teach that true wisdom is found in the humble pursuit of truth and in the courage to follow it wherever it may lead.

Feast Day

The Church commemorates the visit of the Wise Men at the **Feast of the Epiphany**, celebrated on **6 January**. Their journey continues to inspire all who seek truth, wisdom, and God's guidance in their lives.