

January 4, 2026

A Letter from Fr. Patrick Kizza

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, the Feast of the Epiphany celebrates a God who reveals Himself, not quietly or privately, but openly and for all. Through the prophet Isaiah, the Lord proclaims, *“Rise up in splendor, Jerusalem! Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you”* (Is 60:1). These words were spoken to a people who knew what it meant to live in darkness—exile, loss, fear, and uncertainty. Yet God assures them that darkness does not have the last word. His glory shines precisely where the world seems most shadowed. Epiphany reminds us that God’s salvation is not hidden; it is meant to be seen so that “nations shall walk by your light” (Is 60:3).

We recognize this truth in daily life. A lamp left on in a window can guide someone home on a dark night. A calm response in a moment of anger can defuse tension. A small act of kindness can restore hope to someone who feels forgotten. Light does not need to shout to be effective; it simply needs to shine. Isaiah’s image of caravans bringing gold and frankincense is not about wealth, but about hearts drawn toward the radiance of God. As St. Augustine wrote, *“You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.”* When God’s light appears, human hearts instinctively move toward it.

The Gospel of Matthew shows this prophecy fulfilled in the journey of the Magi. These wise men are foreigners, seekers from the East, guided by a star they do not fully understand. They do not have all the answers, but they are willing to follow the light they have been given. In contrast stands King Herod, who has religious knowledge and access to Scripture, yet responds with fear and resistance. Information alone does not lead to faith; openness of heart does. As Pope Benedict XVI observed, *“The Magi represent humanity on the move toward Christ, humanity searching for truth.”*

This contrast plays out in our own lives. We can react like Herod when Christ challenges our routines or exposes our attachments—defensive, anxious, unwilling to change. Or we can respond like the Magi, setting out on a journey that may be inconvenient or uncertain. Following Christ often requires leaving behind familiar paths. G.K. Chesterton once wrote, *“The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and left untried.”* The Magi try. They travel far, ask questions humbly, and kneel in worship when they arrive.

Their gifts reveal what Epiphany asks of us today. Gold symbolizes what we treasure most—our time, our energy, our priorities. Frankincense represents prayer and worship, the daily offering of our hearts to God. Myrrh, a sign of suffering and death, reminds us that love involves sacrifice. As St. Teresa of Ávila famously said, *“Christ has no body now on earth but yours.”* God’s light continues to shine through ordinary people who offer their lives in love.

The story ends with a quiet but powerful detail: the Magi *“departed for their country by another way.”* Encountering Christ always changes our direction. Epiphany is not only about seeing the light of Christ; it is about becoming that light for others. In a world still covered by “thick clouds,” Christians are called to rise, to reflect God’s glory in daily acts of faith and compassion, and to proclaim—by the way they live—the praises of the Lord.