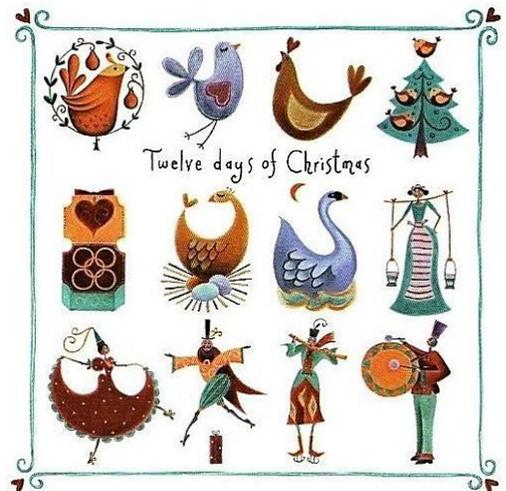


❖ AN EPIPHANY MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR ❖

THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS (Food for Faith)

Although “it’s been said many times, many ways (thank you Nat King Cole)”, there is more to *The Twelve Days of Christmas* than just unusual (with the exception of five gold rings perhaps) Christmas gifts. Unbeknownst to many readers of this message I am sure, each one of those gifts from our *True Love*, brings with it food for faith. And so ... **On the twelfth day of Christmas my true Love gave to me:**

- **Twelve Drummers Drumming:** twelve tenets of the Apostles Creed, twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit;
- **Eleven Pipers Piping:** eleven Apostles who remained after Judas’ betrayal;
- **Ten Lords-a-Leaping:** Ten Commandments;
- **Nine Ladies Dancing:** nine choirs of Angels;
- **Eight Maids-a-Milking:** eight Beatitudes;
- **Seven Swans-a-Swimming:** seven Sacraments,
seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit;
- **Six Geese-a-Laying:** six days God created the world;
- **Five Gold Rings:** five books of the Pentateuch;
- **Four Calling Birds:** four Gospel writers/Evangelists;
- **Three French Hens:** three Divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity;
- **Two Turtle Doves:** two natures in Jesus, two Testaments;
- (and a) **Partridge in a Pear Tree**”: Jesus and the Cross.



And while that makes for a popular centuries old Christmas Carol, and perhaps even a great Catechetical tool, we are told in Sacred Scripture that **on the twelfth day of Christmas:**

“Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem ... and behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the Child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother. They prostrated themselves and did Him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

While it was only after they *saw/recognized* the “newborn King of the Jews” that the Magi offered Him gifts, it is important to note that **they were already prepared/prepared** for their meeting. They studied, they asked questions, and they searched diligently until they found Him.

And so, our meditation on the Lord’s Nativity and in particular on this Epiphany Sunday, our consideration of the Magi, surfaces a few questions to consider at the beginning of a new Calendar Year (2020): Are we prepared to meet Jesus? Do we study the things that can lead us to Him, like our Bibles and our Catechisms? Do we ask questions of others who can lead us to Him, like the Saints, our Priests and Religious? Are we overjoyed at the sight of the place where He is; in the tabernacle of our church beneath the red glow of the sanctuary lamp? What do we do when we enter that place? Do we prostrate ourselves and do Him homage, or do we busy ourselves paying homage to others? And what kind of gifts do we give Him when we open our treasures? These are just some of the questions we should ask ourselves before we *come home* to Our Holy Redeemer, so that we might recognize Him not only on the **twelve days of Christmas**, but every day of the year!