

Message from Robin+

Today is the Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is a principle feast of the Church. It marks the arrival of the magi, led by the star, to the place where the Christ child could be found. The Greek word “epiphany” means unveiling, revealing or showing. **Bishop Jennifer Brooke-Davidson** says that more loosely translated it means, "Dang - didn't see THAT coming in a million years!" When God appears, is revealed, it is never what we expect. It's almost always an undoing of all our careful planning.

As we begin our journey into 2021 may we remember this truth - that God reveals what is to be according to God's plans, not necessarily ours. I share with you one of my favorite poems, *The Journey Of The Magi* by T.S. Eliot, which happens to be an Epiphany poem. There is a link at the bottom to a recording of T.S. Eliot reading his poem, which is powerfully moving. As we continue our faith journey together, may we, like Eliot's magi, not be too at ease in the old dispensation, but long for what God longs to show us.

The Journey Of The Magi by T.S. Eliot

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.
And the camels galled, sorefooted, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
and running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.

Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arriving at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you might say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but I set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

T.S. Eliot, [Collected Poems, 1909-1962](#) (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991). This poem has been shared here under fair use guidelines provided by [The Poetry Foundation](#). To hear T.S. Elliot read his poem aloud, go to this link: [Journey of the Magi from Poetry Archive](#)