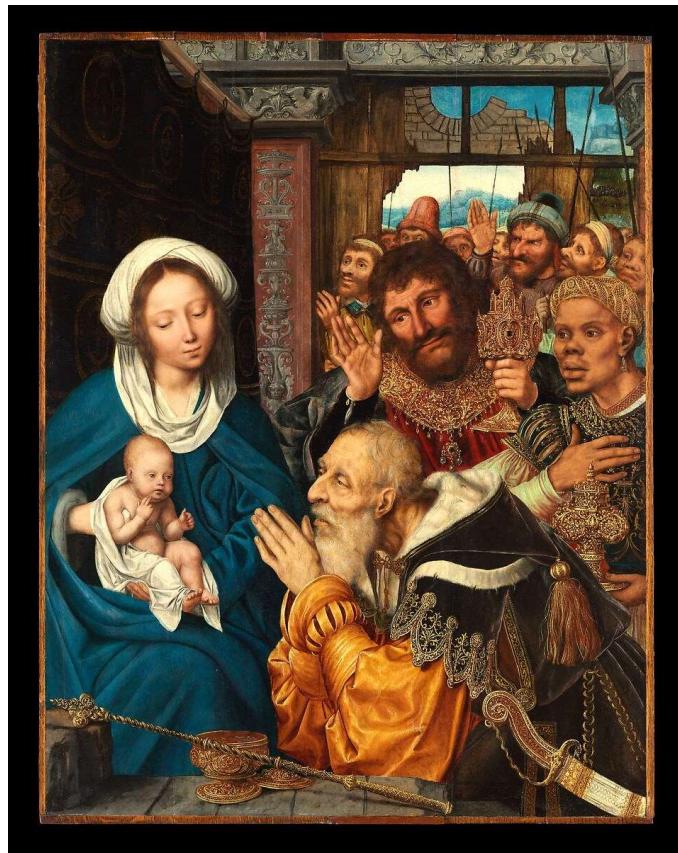


Bringing it Home

For Sunday, January 4, 2026

By Allison de Kanel



Today's Bible story tells us about the Wise Men who followed a star to find Jesus. They must have been wise, but -- even more -- they must have been brave.

They left everything they knew to travel somewhere they had never been. They risked all sorts of dangers, from wild animals to bandits.

Then, near the very end of their journey, they went to Jerusalem. Maybe the skies were cloudy, so they couldn't see the star. They asked King Herod where to find the newborn king -- after all, he should know.

King Herod was a cruel man, but he was also tricky. He didn't want another king to take his throne and his power. So he lied to the Wise Men. He told them he wanted to honor the new king. Really, he wanted to kill him.

The wise Men found Baby Jesus, and God warned them not to report back to King Herod. So they outsmarted the tricky king.

Let's pray. Dear Jesus, help us to be wise and brave as we follow you. Amen.

Today's Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of

them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Artwork: The Adoration of the Magi, 1526, Quinten Massys (Netherlandish, Leuven 1466-1530, Antwerp). From the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY.