

“When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled.”
(Matthew 2:3)



A detailed illustration of the Nativity scene. Mary is seated in the center, holding the infant Jesus in a manger. Joseph is seated to her right. Three kings are kneeling on the right, offering gifts. Two shepherds stand on the left, one holding a staff. The scene is set in a stable with a window showing a night sky with stars. The lighting is warm and focused on the central figures.

Welcoming a King

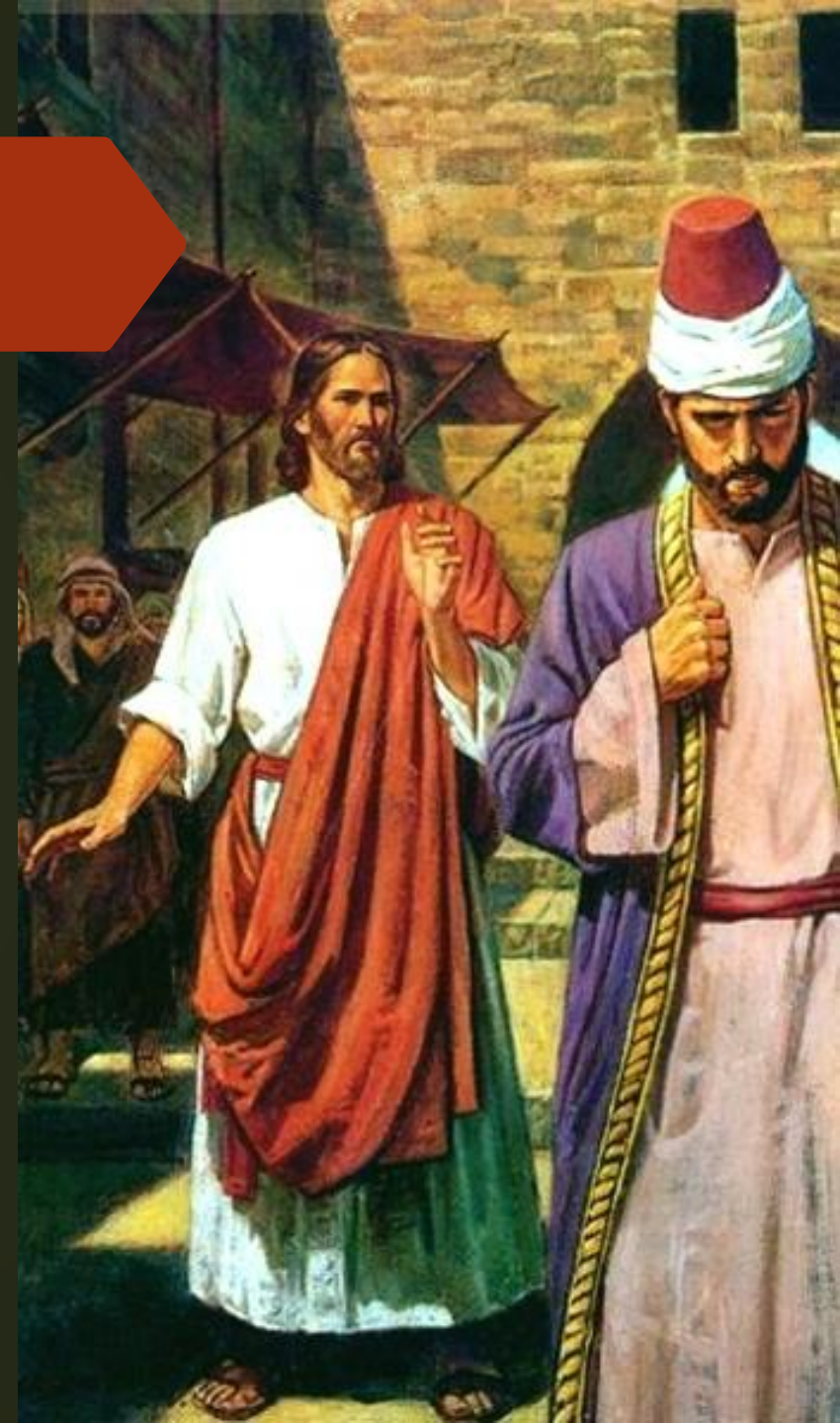
Feast of Nativity | 2026

Introduction

- The birth of Christ did not change the world equally for everyone
- **“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil.”** (Luke 6:45)
- **“Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.”**
(Proverbs 4:23)

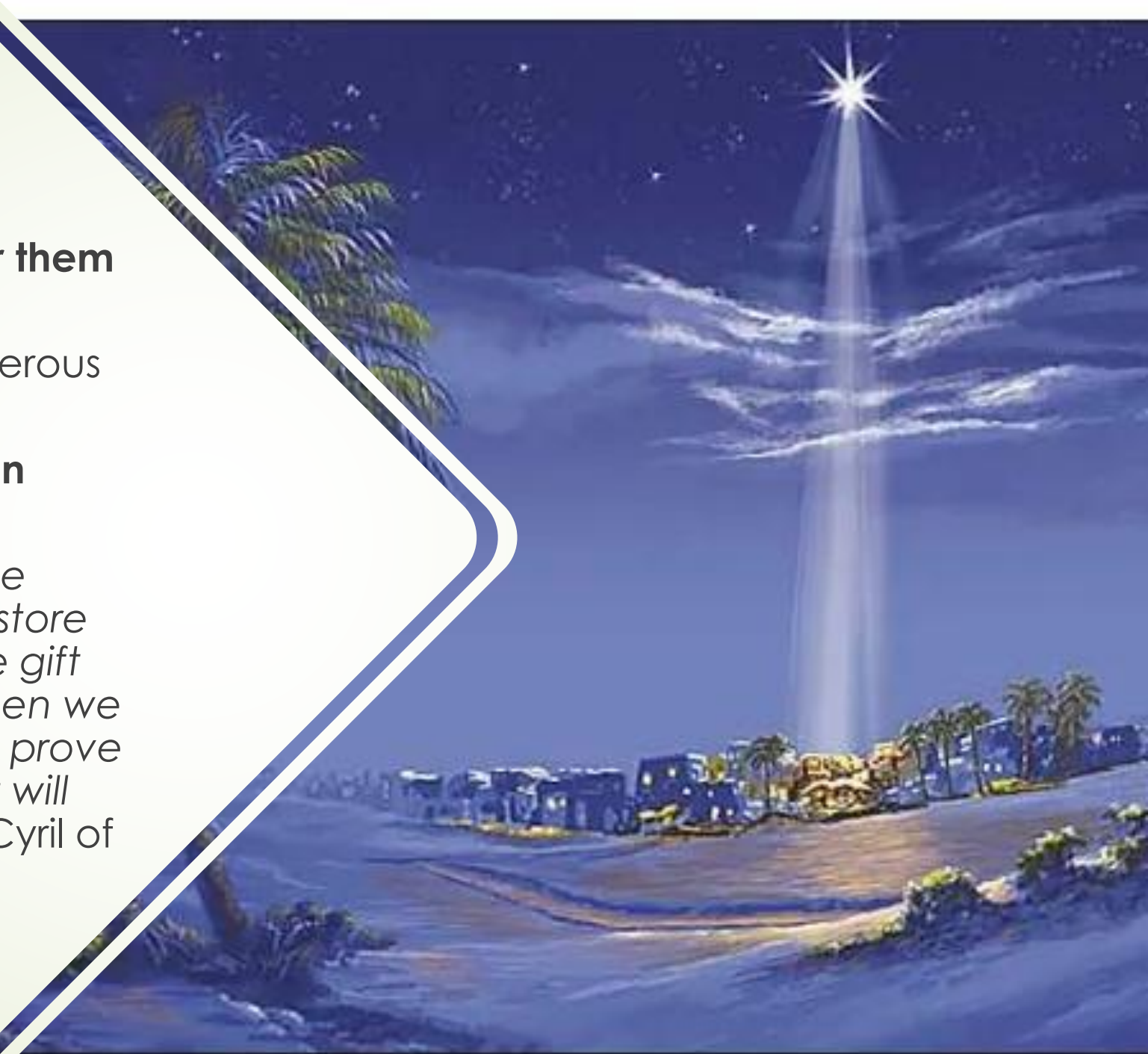
Herod

- ▶ “When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.” (Matthew 2:3)
- ▶ The news of Christ did not bring Herod joy, but anxiety.
- ▶ Christ and the Gospel will challenge our desire for control.
- ▶ “...do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on.” (Matt. 6:25)
- ▶ Rich Young Ruler
- ▶ “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.” (John 12:24)



Bethlehem

- **“Because there was no room for them in the inn.”** (Luke 2:7)
- Indifference is often more dangerous than opposition.
- **“Woe to those who are at ease in Zion...”** (Amos 6:1)
- *“We must therefore not scorn the divine gifts, but rather set great store by what we have from God; the gift will be pleased to dwell in us when we show interest. If, by contrast, we prove indifferent and remiss about it, it will completely take its leave.”* (St. Cyril of Alexandria)



The Wise Men

- “We have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” (Matthew 2:2)
- *“The Magi came from the East, being strangers and foreigners, yet they hastened to worship Him whom the Jews rejected.” (St. John Chrysostom)*





The Shepherds

- **“I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”** (Luke 2:10-11)
- **“Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass.”** (Luke 2:15)
- God reveals Himself to the watchful and diligent

One King, Four Responses

- **Herod** shows us resistance rooted in fear and control.
- **Bethlehem** reveals the danger of indifference and distraction.
- **The Wise Men** model costly faith, humility, worship, and charity
- **The Shepherds** teach us diligence and joyful witness.
- “Behold, I stand at the door and knock.” (Revelation 3:20)

