



## Grand Prelate's Monthly Message

JANUARY 2026

Happy New Year, Sir Knights,

I hope that everyone had a joyous holiday season. We are now at the start of a brand-new calendar year. But even so, that does not mean that the joy of Christmas needs to be put away. Sadly, that is often the case in today's society.

I once heard a story about a family coming to church after Christmas, and they observed that the traditional nativity scene out front had been taken down. Upon seeing this, their son said, "I guess they put Jesus away for the year."

Too many people enjoy the baby Jesus that we celebrate during the Christmas season but put that baby out of their minds and don't think about the Son of God who walked the earth and sacrificed himself on the cross, then rose from the grave, all for our benefit.

Yes, Christmas is over, but the Christmas story does not end with the birth of Christ. Instead, it continues. Enter the wise men from the East of Matthew 2:1-6, *"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel." "*

These 'wise men' were men that had gained knowledge of the birth of the Savior of the world and knew what destiny this infant would have. It stands to reason that at the point when each wise man realized the validity of this coming King, they began to prepare themselves for the trek they would take. The star of Bethlehem rose, they gathered their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and they traveled to Jesus, arrived, worshipped, and gave.

Hearts that are changed by God are hearts that prepare and are hearts that also move in the direction of their Savior.

Look at what the wise men did: because of Jesus they gathered gifts, because of Jesus they traveled, because of Jesus they arrived and worshipped, because of Jesus they gave. How much effort, how much sacrifice must they have made?

And yet, the Bible says in Matthew 2:10 that when they saw the star they "rejoiced exceedingly with great joy."

Jesus is a love gift from God the Father to the world, and we have the joy of being a gift in the form of living sacrifices to God. Like the wise men, we know that our sacrifice pales in comparison of what Jesus did for us, but it is the best life worth living— to give Him our all.

We, who are bought with a price, will make it our life's aim to pay back Jesus Christ, knowing that we could never come close to paying Him back for the eternal debt He paid.

Let us enter 2026 vowing to continue the Christmas spirit and commit to being living sacrifices to Christ, blessing others on His behalf and blessing our King, our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Always and All Ways in Christ

Rick Saunders

Grand Prelate