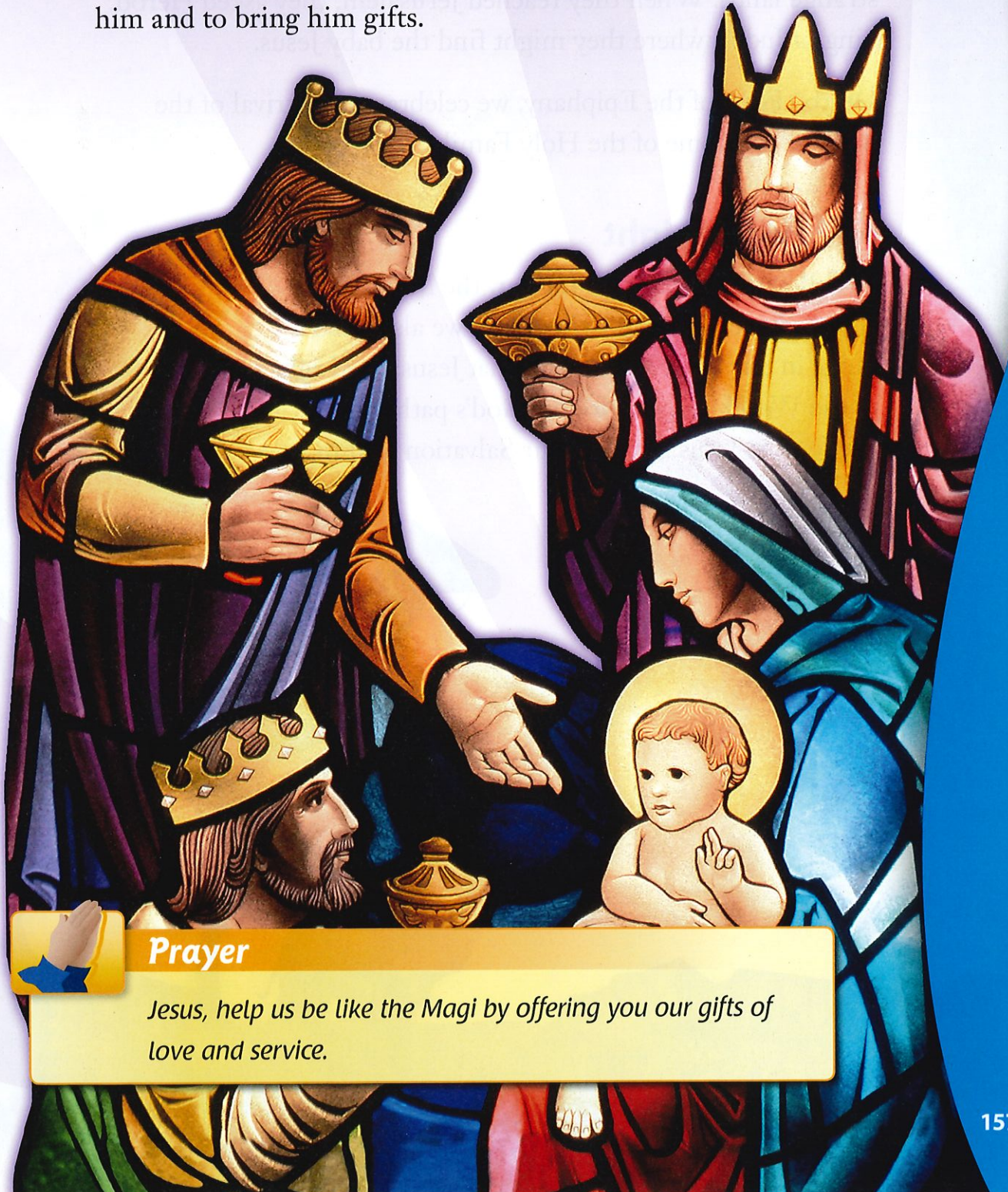


Christmas

During the Christmas season, we celebrate Jesus' birth. About 12 days after Christmas day, we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. On this day we remember the Magi's visit to the infant Jesus. They came to worship him and to bring him gifts.



Prayer

Jesus, help us be like the Magi by offering you our gifts of love and service.



The Journey of the Magi

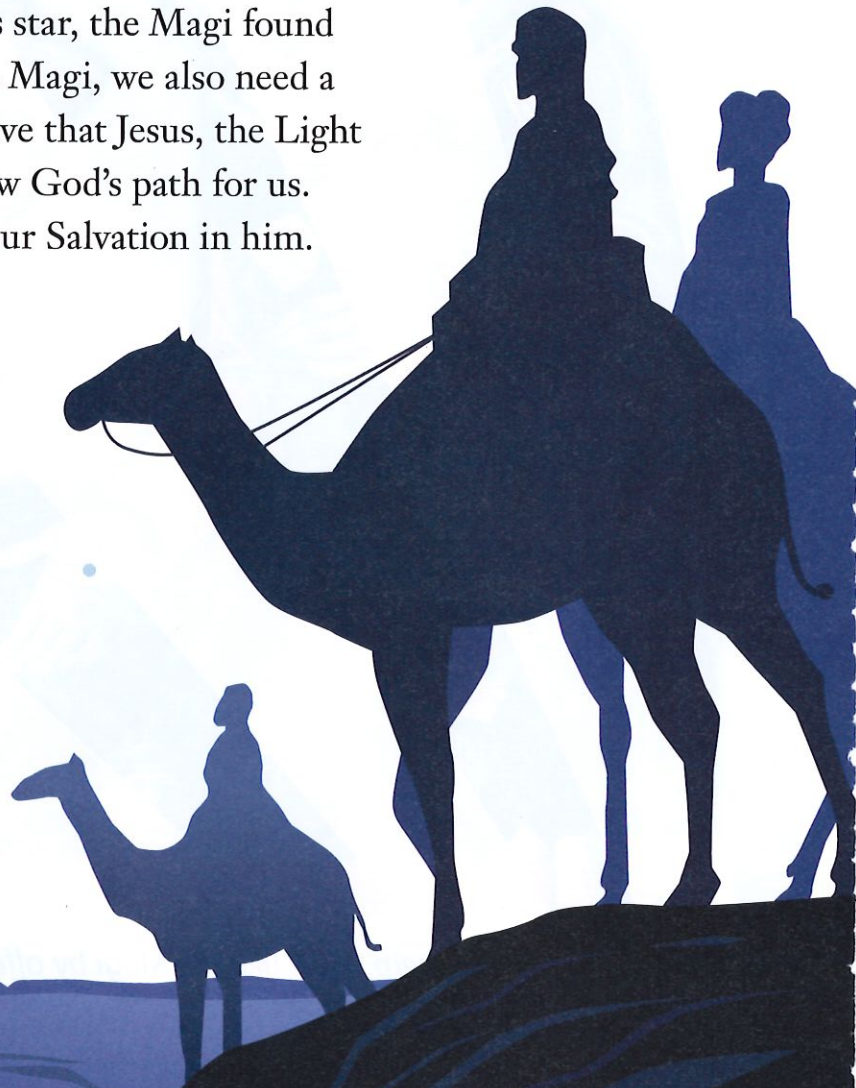
The Magi, who studied the stars, saw one that was brighter than all the others. They believed that this star signaled Jesus' birth. They set out to find him by using the star as their guide. They took gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh with them.

The journey was long and difficult. They had to travel through strange lands. When they reached Jerusalem, they asked Herod, king of Judea, where they might find the baby Jesus.

On the Feast of the Epiphany, we celebrate the arrival of the Magi at the home of the Holy Family.

Follow the Light

By following the Christmas star, the Magi found the newborn king. Like the Magi, we also need a guide in our lives. We believe that Jesus, the Light of the World, helps us follow God's path for us. We look to Jesus and find our Salvation in him.



Jesus' Visitors

Since Jesus' time artists and writers have included details in the Epiphany story that are not included in Matthew's Gospel. While Matthew called the visitors Magi, tradition has referred to them as kings because of the valuable gifts they brought from distant lands. Although the number of Magi is not mentioned in the Gospels, it was assumed that there were three of them because three gifts were offered to Jesus: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

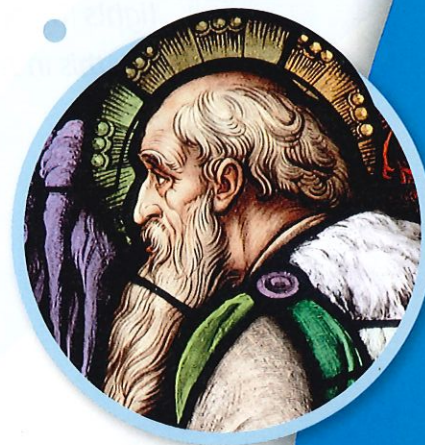
The Gospel of Matthew tells us that the Magi came from the east, but it does not give us their names. According to tradition, however, the visitors are known as Gaspar (or Caspar), Melchior, and Balthasar. Although the Gospel story tells us that the Magi were led by the star to the house where Jesus was, tradition usually shows them being led by the star to the stable.

Follow the Star

On the lines below, list one thing you can say and one thing you can do to show others that you are following Jesus.

Say: _____

Do: _____





Prayer Service

Reader: *A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.*

[Matthew 2:1–11]

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

Leader: *Let us offer prayers of petition.*

That we choose to follow God's plan for us, we pray to the Lord. R̄.

Leader: *That our lives may be an example of love and service, we pray to the Lord. R̄.*

Leader: *Generous God, help us know, as the Magi did, that Jesus, our star, lights the path to Salvation. We ask this in Jesus' name.*

All: *Amen.*

