

## Epiphany

One of the gifts that I received at Christmas was a Jigsaw Puzzle. I do not know who invented Jigsaw Puzzles, but it could have been some wise Abbot who wanted his monks to experience the way that God reveals himself. The picture on the box shows us what the puzzle is meant to look like when it is finished. But every piece of the puzzle has to be carefully looked at before its place in the puzzle can be found so that what is hidden can be revealed. Every piece in its right place reveals a little bit more of the picture.

Today we celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany, the moment when Jesus is revealed to the world. The wise men from the east are given the last pieces of the jigsaw puzzle so that they can find the one for whom they had been searching. They put most of the pieces together well before they set out on their journey. In some mysterious way God had planted in their hearts a desire to know Him. I suppose we should not be surprised about that. Human beings are made to know to love and to serve God. Isn't that what we older ones learnt from the catechism when we were children. The wise men from the east were only being fully human.

But to discover the God who had become human for us is a different journey. The star that they had seen rising gave them almost enough pieces to complete their

puzzle. It pointed the way towards finding the infant king of the Jews. But more pieces needed to be found in Jerusalem. Human wisdom led them to Herod. But he was not interested in finding the kind of king that the wise men were looking for. All he could think of was a rival to his earthly kingship. It was in the scriptures that the hidden pieces of the puzzle were to be found. "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah, for out of you will come a leader who will shepherd my people Israel." Those words from the Prophet Micah were the right colour and just the right shape to lead them on to the place where Jesus had been born. The star they had seen rising halted over the place where the child was. "and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary and falling to their knees they did him homage."

The wise men had brought with them gifts from home that they wanted to share with the newborn king who was now revealed to them. But the very gifts they brought spoke of who he was: king who would offer his life in sacrifice for each one of us.

The journey that the Magi made is one that we are all called to take. Throughout our lives we put together all the pieces of the puzzle that reveal who God is for us. The love that we experience as children puts the edges of the puzzle in place. As we reflect upon what happens to

us throughout our life we discover countless pieces of the puzzle that show a little more of the face of a loving God. There is a mixture of joy and pain in there. The pieces are sometimes dark and sometimes brightly coloured. Sometimes it is very hard to find where those pieces fit. We often need someone else to look at the puzzle with us to discover the place each piece has.

The year that has just ended may have been a difficult year for us. But God has been there with us. There were times when I found I had more time to ponder and pray about what was happening in my life. Perhaps you did too? Perhaps we found ourselves asking the question that the Magi asked, “Where is the infant king of the Jews?” Where is Jesus in my life and in the lives of those around me?

Whenever the wise men found a new piece to their puzzle, they set out again on their journey towards Christ. Today we can pray that our whole life may be a journey of discovery. We can pray that we can keep discovering a little more of who God is for us. And as we discover who God is for us, I’m sure that we will discover more clearly who we are for others.