

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, January 4, 2026
Epiphany
Cycle A

A man went to his pastor and told him, “Father, I feel God has abandoned me. I can’t feel His presence. I can’t hear him. I feel lost and incomplete.” The pastor ushered the man to the baptistry. Then he filled the baptismal font with holy water and, without warning, held the man by the neck and submerged his head in the font. Struggling with all his might, the man escaped the pastor’s stronghold and protested, “Are you trying to kill me? I couldn’t breathe in there.” “If your struggle to find God is as intense as your struggle now to find air,” the pastor said, “then you shall find Him.”

The gospel tells us that Magi or Wise Men from the East traveled in search of the Child as they followed the star. Today, we often read that passage with hardly a thought. We romanticize the journey of the Wise Men as if they were on a luxury trip to Bethlehem. Let us not forget, there were no planes, or cars, or Uber services those days. Travel then was literally a perilous journey. Travelers usually bid their last farewell for their loved ones, fearing they would never be able to come back. Travel would expose them to the elements, to robbers, or to starvation and dehydration in the desert. Biblical scholars estimated that the Magi must have traveled for months to find the Child Jesus.

But the Magi were undaunted in their longing to see the Child. And they were rewarded. This brings to mind a passage from the book of Jeremiah: "You will seek Me and find Me, when you seek Me with all your heart" (29:13). The encounter with the Christ-child brought a profound change in the Magi that they went home, "taking another route." That indicated not only a geographical change, but an existential change - a conversion. Their journey had not only been completed but their life had found its completeness.

Herod, on the other hand, was only five miles away from Bethlehem. The star was also visible from his palace, and a day's journey would have sufficed. But he was too lazy to leave the comfort of his palace. Would Herod have been converted had he visited the Child? He could have but he missed his chance.

To seek God is always a choice in our life. And to find Him is not easy, we need to show some sincerity in our hearts. It is by our sincerity and willingness that we will find true completeness in our search for God.