

## What is your star?

*In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2 asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' Matthew 2:1-2*

### Background<sup>1</sup>

The three wise men, or three kings, only feature in Matthew's gospel. Their journey forms a part of the important message of continuity between the old covenant and Jesus. In the first chapter of Matthew, Jesus is identified as a true son of the line of Abraham and David. In chapter 2, Jesus' life echoes the important life of Moses: the decree of death by the wicked king, the escape, the slaughter of innocent children, and the return after the death of the king. The Jewish readers of the book of Matthew would have a cultural connection with this narrative and would have accepted Jesus as one of their own.



The three wise men are caught up in this drama as the ones who unwittingly inform the wicked king of Jesus' existence and the ones who choose righteousness by refusing to aid the king in his quest. The new thread that Matthew has introduced in the wise men is that they are not Jewish, they are Gentiles. It's not clear where they have come from, but they are not even subjects of Rome. In this way, the author of Matthew sets up from the very beginning that Jesus is both for the Jews and for the Gentiles. The book of Matthew, it can be said, is 'book-ended' by this notion. The closing words of Jesus are the final words of the book, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28:19).

### Story

The three wise men clearly had a passion for watching the heavens. The announcement of Jesus came to them through a passion they had in life. Think of a time in your life when something or someone led you to meet Jesus. It doesn't have to be big, or small. It could be boring or thrilling. Maybe it was a thing, an event, a moment, or a person. Maybe it is something you have just always been aware of — pointing the way to Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> *The Gospel of Matthew*, Daniel J Herrington, The Liturgical Press: 1991.

Take some time to really think about these moments, people or events that have pointed you to Jesus. Remember what your life was like and how you felt. Remember how they looked or what the weather was like. Was there any talking? Or was there silence? There aren't any right or wrong answers, just an awareness of something that was huge and life-changing or something still, small and quiet.

Write a few lines ,draw a picture or sing a song about the moment you picked.

Share with the group if you'd like.

### **Bringing it together**

Jesus meets us everyday through stars and nature, through music and art, through events, through words, but most of all through people. What are some of the ways that people can point the way to Jesus?

What are some ways that YOU can point the way to Jesus for other teens?

### **Action**

Choose to do an Advent-calendar of "star work": choose something each week or each day that you can do to lead the way to Christ. Then, go and do it!

Operation Santa Youth Event can be a part of your action list, too! By serving those in need, we can point the way to a God who cares about them.

### **Prayer**

Jesus, you came to earth and became human alongside of us. There were many signs and people that pointed to your presence here at your birth and throughout your ministry. Help us to see those signs in new ways today. And bless us to be enabled to be those signs for others to meet you.

Amen.