



Joy to the World

December, 1998

Your Majesty:

A rather unusual salutation, don't you think? But then again, perhaps it is not so unusual.

The focus of my Christmas message this year is the story of the Magi, the Three Kings. The Christmas Story, including the part about the Magi is a never-ending one that repeats itself every Christmas. Actually, every day we can choose to place ourselves in the role of the Three Kings. We are a royal people. We have a share in the Kingship of Jesus which can be traced back to the Roots of Jesse.

Those of us who received the Sacraments of Initiation were anointed with oil just as the kings of old were anointed with oil. The oil symbolizes that the anointed one has been set aside for a particular purpose. For the kings of the past, the purpose was to protect, lead, and serve their people.

Let us consider the Magi as a role model. They did not let their status go to their head. They did not act high and mighty. They left the safety of their palaces and even risked the loss of their thrones to usurpers that might take advantage of their absence. In an act of faith they followed a star in search of a Baby to recognize Him as the King of Kings, and to adore Him and pay Him homage and of course, bring Him gifts. Surely their journey was most difficult. They had no planes, trains, buses, cars, road maps, only a star to follow. They traveled by foot and camel across a desert that was unbearably hot during the day, and cold at night with no protection from Mother Nature or marauding bandits.

They exhibited great faith in following that star. They let God guide them to where He wanted them to go not where they wanted to go. And of course they brought gifts for the Baby.

At Christmas we have a wonderful opportunity to assume the role of the Magi. Many of us through your local parishes, or in support of the Salvation Army or other community

groups, and even in our own Agency, bring gifts to the Risen Jesus in the persons of the poor and needy. The Giving Trees, the Angel trees, Toys for Tots and individual Agency toy and gift collections and of course the Beacon Sharing Fund are just a few of the ways that people become the Magi each year.

So thank you for following that star. Remember that every day we should be celebrating Christmas and every day we should look for the star that God will surely send to guide us to where he wants us to be in service of others.

I wish you a very Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year and a safe journey as you follow your star this year. As is said so beautifully in Spanish, on your journey, Vayan con Dios todos ustedes, mis amigos!

Sincerely,



Joe Duffy