



Meditation for the New Year January 3, 2021

*Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.*

[Isaiah 60:1]

During this year of transition, we are perhaps more aware than ever before that the magi's journey is *our* journey:

We too begin in the half-light just before dawn.

We too travel in a dangerous world.

Our destination is the same as theirs: To honor Christ with the gifts of our hearts.

We too travel with a faith that awakens wonder and frees us from fear.

We too must be prepared to change our plans--to "go by a different road."

For us, too, Christ is a light that cannot be extinguished.

Like the magi, we are on the path to an entirely new way of living. We cannot know what the post-covid era will bring, but we do know that that we will treasure ordinary moments that we may never have noticed before this year. We are both stronger and more vulnerable after facing the challenges of this year, both empowered and humbled by the grace that has sustained us. We are perhaps more likely to see and to trust light of the Bethlehem star in our lives.

And so as we begin this journey together, let us be mindful of our bonds with people who live miles away in cultures and circumstances strange to us. Let us resolve to move forward from where we are in this moment by learning and studying, opening our minds to new ways of understanding and preparing ourselves to receive whatever gifts God will offer to us this year.

At the beginning of each year, it has become my tradition to review the tips from Robert Fulghum's book, *All I Really Need to Know I learned in Kindergarten*. This year, I have found these simple tips especially reassuring:

- *Share everything.*
- *Play fair.*
- *Don't hit people.*
- *Put things back where you found them.*
- *Clean up your own mess.*
- *Don't take things that aren't yours.*
- *Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.*
- *Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.*
- *Take a nap every afternoon.*
- *Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the Styrofoam cup: the roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows how or why, but we are all like that.*
- *When you go out in the world, watch out for traffic, hold hands and stick together.*