

JANUARY 4, 2026 FATHER THOMAS LYNCH

It's said that you'll know somebody by the pop or the rock songs that they remember and they quote. So, maybe some of you people at home will remember James Taylor. James Taylor in 1988 had a sudden sort of burst of Christianity and he actually wrote a song about this Feast Day. We wrote a song about the Epiphany. It's called "By Another Way."

And in it, he's singing in his normal sort of, what they call, sort of soft rock or yacht rock kind of thing and he speaks about, well, what were those wisemen really looking for? Were they that naive, these kings, to be deceived by yet another king? He said probably not. Because in a world, there's a lot of Herods in the world, and as he famously said, Taylor sings, he said, "Don't expect that man that's gonna slaughter the innocent is going to cut a deal for you, right?"

And so, when they, their eyes were opened, when it was illuminated, when they really recognized the Epiphany, which is the showing forth of the Messiah, they realized something different. They realized that it wasn't their duty to some earthly king to go back to Herod, their duty was something else.

Your duty is something else as well. Your duty is not to go along the normal path and way of the rest of the world. You have been illuminated by your baptism, by your confirmation, and by your continued growth in the sacraments, and because of that illumination, you've come to recognize that that Epiphany, that showing forth of Christ, has been so central in your life that you too are called to go on a different way.

It's not going to be an easy way. We don't know anything about the wisemen after they disappeared from this. Poets and other singers have written about them and speculated, but how did it change their life? How

does knowing Christ change your life? It means that we have to ask ourselves, well, what way are we on now?

Probably, if you're listening to this mass, it's not the Road to Perdition that you're on, but is it actually the road that brings you, really, to that different country? To that new country? To that way of being able to know the fullness and the eventual end of all of us.

Many of us really are on that road. Most people sort of just keep their heads down. Years ago, I was being moved from one parish to another parish and the Epiphany was my last actual day in the parish. And that day, I actually broke my BlackBerry, if some of you remember BlackBerries. I drove over my BlackBerry and I said to people we couldn't have the Epiphany now because it said they looked up and they saw a star, but nobody's looking up anymore. They're all looking down at their handheld devices, except me because I drove over mine and I broke it.

And that's true. A lot of us don't have our eyes lifted up or I would say even our hearts lifted up.

In a few minutes, we're going to have the continuation of mass, and right there in the preface is a very interesting command. It says, "Lift up your hearts to the Lord." And that's not a suggestion, it's a command because in the midst of this world, we can be so weighed down, so preoccupied that we aren't willing to look up and to see that star which can guide us on our way.

To change us from where we were to be able to have us set out on that journey that will come to the realization that God is truly to be at the centre of all of our lives.

We don't know anything about the wisemen before. We don't know a lot about the wisemen after. But we have this one central moment. This one central realization when they came in the midst of their stature and their high status and, as we heard in the psalm, they knelt down before the King of Kings and they opened up the gifts.

It's not just the road that you're on. Are you willing to bring your gifts to the Lord? Are you willing to say, "Here they are?" Maybe they may be magnificent, maybe they may be very humble, but we're called to be able to open up our gifts. Our time, our treasure, our talents, before the Lord and everyone of you here at home has talents, has gifts.

Be willing to actually share those gifts in the fullness of who you are, in the fullness of what Christ has called us to do, but also to be so that as we continue on our way, we can take that better road, that different way. Not bowing to all the demands of the world, but hearing the voice, the power and the certainty of Jesus Christ, who has called us, and who then will send us out on His way. That one who called Himself the way, the truth, and the life.

This is our gift, this is our grace, and this really is our vocation.