



REFLECTIONS

December 27, 2015

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

Matthew 2:1-2

Following the Star

This season of each year I seem to find myself recalling memories of Christmases past. They are pleasant ones, so the season for me is nostalgically reliving them through the traditions of days gone by. They are graced with memories of loved ones now smiling down from their heavenly home. It is a time to count the many blessings of life through the years; but it is also a time to count the many blessings of today. Chief among them are the beaming faces of our family as we gather to celebrate the birth of our Savior. Emotion consumed us as we tried to express our thankfulness for God's enduring love.

But memories of the past and its many blessings are but a part of the season. The season also prompts an intriguing question—the one pondered by Julie Andrews in her portrayal of Maria von Trapp in the *Sound of Music*. "What will the future bring? I wonder," she mused in song along the path to the home of Captain von Trapp. Reverend Mother had directed Maria to reconsider God's calling for her life, so she naturally wondered what a new beginning would bring.

New beginnings are entered with both expectations and elements of surprise. Sometimes, as with the outset of a new year, new beginnings produce resolutions to improve on past decisions, eliminate bad habits, and to adopt healthy practices. But there is also the ever present question, what will the future bring. Experience tells that surprises are in store—some received with joy, others with disappointment; some result in dreams fulfilled, others with life altering conditions. So what will the future bring? I wonder.

It's a question the Magi must have asked when the brilliance of a star in the sky captured their attention? What drew them to follow it into places unknown? Mustn't they have wondered how long the journey would be and what the future would bring as they embarked on it? Only one way are the answers to be found—by following the Star. And at journey's end, they found the Savior

So as we enter the New Year in our continuing journey through this life, what will the future bring? I wonder. Filled with hopes and expectations, elements of surprise will envelop them both. But there is only one way the answers can be found. Just as the Magi learned. The answers are found by following the Star.

And at journey's end, you'll find the Savior.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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Your comments are welcomed and encouraged. Richard may be reached at richard@reflectingthesavior.org.