

The Feast of the Epiphany

(Children)

The wise men who visited baby Jesus in Bethlehem liked to study the stars. They may have been astronomers. We know from the Bible that it was a star which led them to the house in Bethlehem where Jesus and his Mum and Dad lived. Who was Jesus's Mum and Dad? Of course Jesus had a hand in creating the stars in the first place because He was God, even as a baby.

We sometimes call people stars if they excel at some sport or are very popular in the field of music or film. Can you name a sports star for me? Can you name a film star, past or present? Can you name a pop star? Because they are so good at what they do, these people stand out from the crowd and get noticed. The heavenly star which led the three wise men to Bethlehem was a moving star which was brighter than the rest. The wise men travelled during the night when it was cool and rested during the day to avoid the sweltering heat. The light of the star guided their way in the darkness until they reached Bethlehem where baby Jesus was.

When Jesus grew up He became a super star in his own right, not a pop star or a film star or a sports star. Massive crowds followed him everywhere. On one occasion he miraculously fed a crowd of 5000 on five loaves and two fishes and they wanted to make him a King there and then. But Jesus didn't want to be a King. He preferred to be an unsung hero. He performed miracles which no one had ever seen before. Can you tell me one of his miracles? So Jesus became a star because of all the help he gave to people. He didn't perform miracles just to be a show-off or to dazzle the crowd. He helped disabled people to walk again, he helped blind people to see again, he calmed the storm when the boat he and his friends were in was in

danger of sinking. What a star He was. But he says to each one of us 'let your light shine - allow your goodness to sparkle'. When you help people like Jesus did, you too will stand out from the crowd. But like Jesus, you won't be helping people just to be noticed. The stars only come out at night when all is quiet. It's mostly when we do a good turn for someone and keep quiet about it that our true goodness becomes evident. That's when you become a real star.

The wise men took a different road back to their own country than the one they came. As we grow up, if we remain friends with Jesus, it doesn't matter what route we take in life, our inner goodness will always shine out like the night sky and remain undimmed.