



*Oh Star of Wonder, Star of Night,*

*Guide us with thy Perfect Light!*

*Michael Davis, Office of Lay Ministry*

*Greetings! A New Year is Dawning!*



As I was driving home from a parish council visit this December on a dark Advent night a brilliant star appeared in the cold winter sky to the east and south. I was overwhelmed by the intensity of light it was emitting as it flickered white and shades of blue and green. It was mesmerizing

and I had to concentrate on the road but was drawn back to the wonder and awe of God's stellar and infinite creation. This image brought me to the anticipation and waiting of Advent and quickly to the journey of wise men who sought out the Christ Child from afar by following the yonder Star of Bethlehem.



*"The star which they had observed at its rising went ahead of them until it came to a standstill over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house, found the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened coffers and presented him with gold, frankincense, and myrrh."*

*Matthew 2:9b-12*

This is hopefully arriving to your home or parish on or around the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord. The readings for that Sunday are filled with the images of light in the form of the star, the wise men's seeking, and in the Christ Child of Jesus. Darkness is portrayed in the winter night surrounding the manger that held Joseph, Mary, and Jesus and in the shadows of Herod's heart which sought to seek and destroy the new born Immanuel. Our hope is in God's protection of the Holy Family which reaches across time and space into our lives. We too choose as the magi did to seek the mystery and illumination of God's saving light. Jesus is present to us in others, our daily lives, and in the breaking of the bread.

*Child of Wonder*



Oh star of wonder,  
star of night,  
*Wonder & Awe*  
Star with royal  
beauty bright,  
*Prince of Peace*  
Westward leading,  
still proceeding,  
*Journey with us*  
Guide us with thy  
perfect light,  
*Illuminate us*  
Gold I bring to  
crown him again,  
*Sovereign of life*  
Frankincense to  
offer have I,  
*Sweet Aroma*  
Myrrh is mine, its  
bitter perfume,  
*Chrismal Child*  
**Alleluia, Alleluia!**  
Earth to heaven  
replies.

**Lay Ministry**

There is a new book by Bishop Matthew H. Clark a leading voice in lay ecclesial ministry. It offers his personal insights on the need and significance of lay ministry. Forward in Hope: Say Amen to Lay Ecclesial Ministry examines the ever-growing significance of lay ecclesial ministry today and for the future of the Church.

Please go to the following link to read an excerpt (a copy is also available from REMEX).  
<http://www.avemariapress.com/assets/Assets/Downloads/Forward%20in%20Hope%20excerpt.pdf>

**One Future~Un Futuro**

Strategic Planning;

Parishes, Councils, & Deaneries

Please contact me soon to arrange a presentation or consultation. The Annual Reports are due July 1<sup>st</sup>; let me know how I can assist you in the planning process.



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