

Dear Magi...



Salamanca, 5 January 2024

I suppose their Majesties from the East are very busy these days preparing gifts for young and old alike, as they did more than two thousand years ago with that child who had just been born in a manger in little Bethlehem. Guided by a star, and like good astrologers, you knew how to find that family in the midst of the darkness and the cold. And according to Matthew's Gospel, you worshipped him and gave him gold, frankincense and myrrh. So this is what I ask of you for our communities of Faith and Light in every corner of the world:



- **THE GOLD** of valuing each person as a treasure, of knowing that each human being is a sacred story in which God has placed his caress and his Spirit, above their abilities, disabilities or incapacities (which we all have).
- **THE INCENSE** of a community life that is a witness in the midst of the world to the Love of God and that lives its vocation with joy and commitment, thus being an attractive perfume, a credible fragrance and a delicious aroma, which invites us to live life and faith as a feast.
- **THE MIRRA** of authentic relationships, beyond appearances and conventions, made of gestures and details, gratitude and the ability to ask for forgiveness and to forgive, like a good oil that heals and repairs, that takes care of people and helps to strengthen bonds.

What I ask of you may be a lot, but we, the communities of Faith and Light, pledge to do our part to make it happen. Each person, whether they are from anywhere in the world, whether they have been in a community for a short or long time, whether they have a coordinating role or not, will do their best to make Faith and Light like gold, frankincense and myrrh for those who need to receive these gifts.

Finally, dear Magi, as you know, our Faith and Light communities are a bit like the family you met that night in Bethlehem, made up of that holy couple with their baby, a few animals and some shepherds. We don't make the headlines either and we don't have a lot of material resources. But we have the treasure of our friends with disabilities, who bring us closer to the heart of God.

As you know, that region, which was already experiencing violence and conflict in the time of Jesus, is still more or less in the same state. It seems unbelievable that after so many years, the same land that the child Jesus walked on is still suffering the death and terror of its inhabitants today, caused by bombs, bullets and the interests of both sides. And alongside them, other areas of the world continue to suffer from war, such as Ukraine and so many countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. And violence in so many countries in the form of discrimination on any grounds, so many forms of abuse of women, so many "civilised" forms of control, subjugation and slavery. Forgetting those who suffer the most, supporting people with illnesses, our attitude towards so many groups who are left out.

May our communities be Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh for humanity.

United in Jesus
Raúl Izquierdo García
International coordinator of Faith and Light