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PRAYER

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son, Jesus Christ, came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.

Church of England Book of Common Prayer - [First Sunday of Advent prayer](#)

WARM UP

(OPTIONAL)

What is an opportunity you missed out on, but you wish you might have taken?

NOTES

WORD

¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶ "And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

⁷ Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹ After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹ And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

[MATTHEW 2:1-12](#)

It is both amazing and heartbreaking to see how many people missed Jesus' birth.

- The innkeeper missed the fact that the King of kings was being born in his inn, because he was so caught up in having the crowd in his place of business.
- King Herod missed that the real King of kings was born in his jurisdiction of Bethlehem, because he did not want to relinquish his kingship and rulership in recognition that Jesus was and is the King of all.
- The religious leaders missed the birth of Jesus because although they knew the Old Testament inside and out (including the quote from Micah that is in verse 6 from 700 years before Jesus was born), they couldn't recognise the difference between the Living Word and any word.

Let us not miss Jesus because of our pursuit of busyness and crowds, our desire to hold our own power, and our inability to see that Jesus is the fulfilment of the written Word.

GUIDE QUESTIONS

(NUMBERED ACCORDING TO LEVEL OF DEPTH AND READINESS TO SHARE)

1. On a scale from 1-10 (1 = never; 10 = always), how would you rate your ability to never miss good opportunities? Why do you rate yourself this way?
2. On a scale from 1-10 (1 = none at all; 10 = always), how would you rate your awareness of things spiritually around you in your day to day life?
3. Why do you think people miss out on experiencing Jesus on an every day basis? Do you personally find this happens in your life?
4. If Jesus is the hope of the world, why then do you think people seek this hope elsewhere? How can we actively seek Jesus?
5. Have you put your trust in God with your life and relationships? Would you like to receive the gift of life, found in forever walking with God? Would you like to enter into a saving relationship with God through Jesus? Ask your Life Group leader to lead you in prayer to receive Christ. You can pray this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner, and I ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died for my sins and rose from the dead. I turn from my sins and invite you to come into my heart and life. I want to trust and follow you as my Lord and Saviour. In Jesus' name, Amen.

PRAYER