

Scripture for January 4, 2009 Epiphany

Reflection from John Surette, SJ

Star Throwers

“Behold, Magi (astrologers) from the East arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star...’ (Matthew 2:1-2)

I have a book taken from the Spiritearth library up on our fourth floor. It is titled “The Star Thrower.”

Its author is Loren Eiseley. He was an astronomer, not an astrologer. He died in 1977. He wrote many books. He was in love with the Universe. He was fascinated by all of its details.

Loren Eiseley had trouble sleeping. He spent long hours late at night and early in the morning walking in the forests and along the beaches.

One such beach was a long strip of sand along the west coast of Florida. Before dawn one morning he was walking along this beach. He loved to watch the sun come up over the water and to see what the tide brought in and to smell the air where the land and water embrace each other.



At this time in his life he did not believe in God. When people asked why, he said it was because there are so many people in the world who tend to destroy what is good and beautiful.

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1515 W. Ogden Ave.
LaGrange Park, IL 60526
www.csjthewell.org
thewell@csjoseph.org

And so on one particular morning he was walking along the beach and was overjoyed to see so many people there....until he found out what they were doing. They were waiting for the tide to come in, picking-up all the starfish that were deposited on the sand, killing them, spraying them with shellac, and selling them to tourists.

Eiseley became so depressed that he started walking the beach earlier and earlier in the morning so that he did not have to witness what these people were doing.

Very early one morning he saw this one man on the beach who was picking-up the starfish and throwing them back into the water. He was throwing them as far as he could beyond the tide line, hoping that they would stay far out and not be washed again up onto the beach, hoping to save them from all the people who would come and kill them.

Eiseley went into the nearby town to find out who this man was but nobody knew. They did know that he had been doing this for some 26 years. Eiseley decided to call this man “The Star Thrower.” He throws life back away from those who want to kill it.

And Eiseley thought that somehow there is hope for this world if there is one person who will try to stop the death. And Eiseley said that this was the first time that he believed in God and he called God “the star thrower of the universe.”

On this feast of the Epiphany, those of us who follow in the way pointed out by Jesus, those of us who follow his star, can call him our “star thrower of the Universe.”

Every time we make a choice for death, Jesus says “No.” Every time we feel patriotic upon hearing the drums of war, Jesus says “No.” Every time we produce plutonium that is lethal even in microscopic amounts for well over 250,000 years, Jesus says “No.” Every time we accept increased global warming as inevitable, Jesus says “No.” Every time we make a choice for death, Jesus says “No.”

Jesus says, “I don’t want you to continue to deal in death. I want you to deal with life.” Jesus says, “Do not destroy what is good and beautiful.”

May you and I be overjoyed to be possessors of this teaching. May we be moved to action by this teaching. May we be changed by this teaching and may our lives never be the same again! May we too become star throwers of the Universe!

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