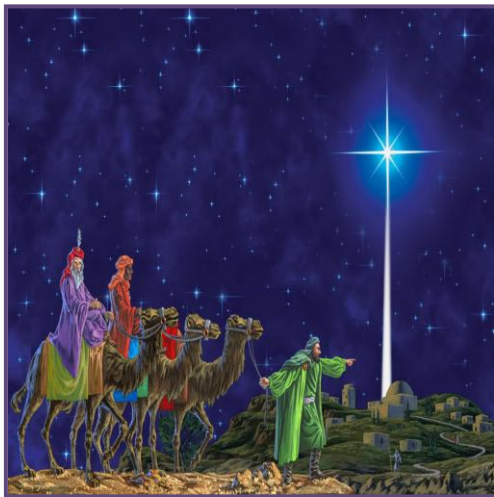


Giving the Very Best

Anyone who has studied American literature much will recognize the name, O. Henry, famous for short stories characterized by wit, wordplay and clever endings. Actually, O. Henry was the pen name of William Sydney Porter (1862 – 1910), born in Greensboro, N.C.

One of O. Henry's most famous stories is *The Gift of the Magi*, about a young couple, Jim and Della, who are short of money but desperately want to buy each other Christmas gifts. Unbeknownst to Jim, Della sells her most valuable possession, her beautiful hair, in order to buy a platinum fob chain for Jim's watch. And unbeknownst to Della, Jim sells his own most valuable possession, his watch, to buy jeweled combs for Della's hair.

The sacrifice of their most treasured possessions showed the depth of their love for each other.



Wanting to give the greatest gifts to one's spouse is understandable and laudable. But when a small group of astrologers journeyed from their distant land to bring expensive gifts to the infant Jesus, it was a remarkable act of worshipful recognition. He was just a young child, born to poor parents in the most humble of circumstances. Yet, somehow they knew He deserved the best they had, and they gave it.

The actions of the three wise men present to us a thoughtful question: If they who knew Jesus not at all gave Him their best, how much more should we who know Him give? The query is worth some soul-searching.

On the day after Christmas, make a New Year's resolution to give Jesus the gift that keeps on giving – the gift of your love.

And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matthew 2:11).

– Beecher Hunter