

The gift of myrrh

by [Gracia Grindal](#) in the [January 3, 2018](#) issue

The third sage brought us myrrh for his mortal flesh  
Wrapped up in strips of cloth to ward off the stink  
Cadavers make in the grave after death,  
Harbingers for my son, unlikely king.  
Bitter its fragrance, filling that house of birth.  
The odor of death mixing in with old perfume,  
Graves dug into the side of humble earth.  
Later inside an unused marble room  
Swaddled in linen, ready for us to lave  
His familiar limbs with costly oils  
The scents, omens the third wise man gave  
Now rising up from Eden's garden soil,  
Covered up my son in the linen shroud,  
All faith and hope drifting around my doubt.