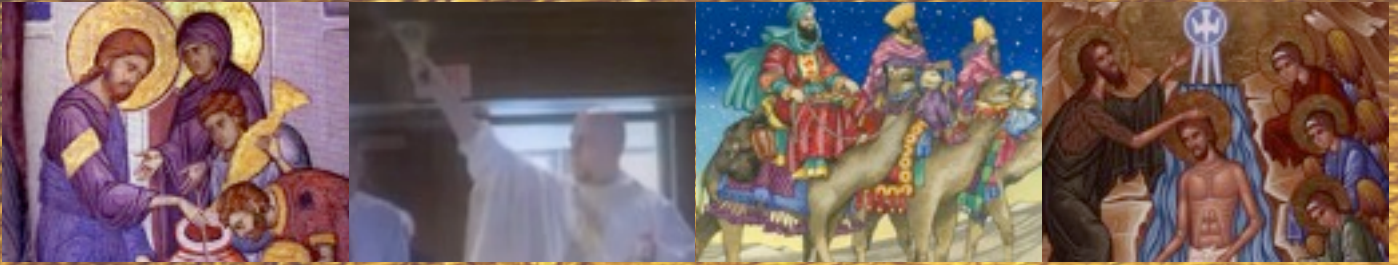


Fr. David's Weekly Newsletter



January 6, 2012

The Epiphany of the Lord

May the splendor of your majesty, O Lord, we pray, shed its light upon our hearts, that we may pass through the shadows of this world and reach the brightness of our eternal home.

HISTORY, TRADITIONS, CUSTOMS

The Church's celebration of Epiphany (*manifestation*), the "twelfth night of Christmas," apparently originated in Egypt sometime during the third century, thus the Church's celebration of this feast predates even the celebration of Christmas itself.

Epiphany is traditionally celebrated in honor of the adoration of the Magi, the baptism of the Lord, and the Wedding at Cana; three manifestations of the Lord's divinity.

Because the Magi came from the Orient, many of the traditional foods served on this day are spicy. Spice cake is often baked for dessert, and entrees may include curry powder or other pungent spices.

Several lovely family customs are associated with Epiphany. It is on Epiphany that the Christmas creche is finally completed, as the figures of the three wise men at last arrive at the crib. In many families, the wise men are moved a bit closer to the

crib every day from Christmas Day until Epiphany. Also, recalling the gifts to the Infant Jesus, many families exchange small gifts.

A time-honored custom (especially in France) is the baking of a cake with a bean or trinket hidden inside. The person whose cake contains the bean is made king of the feast. Processions of robed and crowned "wise men" to the manger are fun for little ones, and provide them with an opportunity to think of a good deed that they can offer as a gift to Jesus.

The blessing of the home is also a popular Epiphany custom. using specially blessed chalk, many households mark their entrance door with the year and with the inscription CMB, the initial Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, the names of the three wise man in legend. The inscription also stands for *Christus Mansionem Benedicat*, which means "Christ, bless this home." The popular form the inscription takes is 20+C+M+B+12. It remains above the doorway until Pentecost.



Lord, every nation on earth will adore you!

In England, Twelfth Night was traditionally celebrated with a drink called Lamb's Wool, made of cider or ale, with roasted apples and sugar and spices. It was the custom to bless apple trees on that night by pouring a libation of cider on them.

Different parts of Europe have different traditional recipes for the Epiphany cake – from the almond-paste-filled pastry, the French “galette de Rois” topped by golden paper crown, to the British fruit-filled, iced and layered confection. Some bakeries feature these cakes during the holiday season.

We Three Kings of Orient Are ...

The carol “We Three Kings” was written by Rev. John Henry Hopkins (1820-1891) in 1857, he wrote both the music and lyrics of this carol. In 1863 it was published in Rev. Hopkins' *Carols, Hymns and Songs*. “We Three Kings” was originally written for the General Theological Seminary in New York during their Christmas pageant. Aside from being a writer and editor, Hopkins was also a stained glass artist and a book illustrator.



Blessing of Chalk

Let us pray. O Lord God, bless this creature chalk to make it helpful to man. Grant that we who use it with faith and inscribe with it upon the entrance of our homes may enjoy physical health and spiritual protection. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

House Blessing

Lord God of Heaven and Earth, who hast revealed thine only-begotten Son to every nation by the guidance of a star: Bless this house and all who inhabit it. Fill them with the light of Christ, that their love for others may truly reflect thy love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

THREE KINGS TRIVIA

1. How many Wise Men (Magi) visited Joseph, Jesus and Mary in Bethlehem?

- a. Four b. Two c. Nobody knows d. Three

2. Which King of Israel wanted to kill the baby who would grow to become the Messiah?

- a. Caesar Augustus b. Flavius Josephus c. Quirinius d. Herod

3. Who wrote the text of the Epiphany carol “We Three Kings of Orient Are”?

- a. Phillips Brooks b. Charles Wesley c. John Henry Hopkins Jr. d. Josef Mohr

4. The story of the visit of the Wise Men appears in the Gospel according to whom?

- a. John b. Mark c. Matthew d. Luke

5. Which of the following is not a kind of Three Kings Cake?

- a. La Rosca de Reyes b. Dreikönigskuchen c. Galette des Rois d. Kulitch

6. Whose poem “The Journey of the Magi” begins “A cold coming we had of it, just the worst time of the year for a journey, and such a long journey”?

- a. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow b. William Butler Yeats c. T.S. Eliot d. O. Henry

7. What is the language of origin and meaning of the word “epiphany”?

- a. French, “before Lent” b. German, “after Christmas” c. Latin, “astrologers” d. Greek, “to show forth”

8. What are/were the three traditional names assigned to the Wise Men (Magi)?

- a. Huey, Dewey, Louie b. Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego c. Peter, Paul, James d. Caspar, Melchior, Balthasar

9. “The Adoration of the Magi” was commissioned in the late 15th Century as an altarpiece for the Augustinian monks of San Donato a Scopeto in Florence. It was unfinished and now hangs in the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. Who painted it?

- a. Sandro Botticelli b. Andrea del Verrocchio c. Leonardo da Vinci d. Fra Angelico

10. What is myrrh?

- a. the Arabic word for silver b. a mercury compound for healing c. nutmeg d. dried sap of an African tree



Answers: 1. c; 2. d; 3. c; 4. c; 5. d; 6. c; 7. d; 8. c; 9. d



EPIPHANY

They did him homage and opened their treasures, offering him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And having been warned in a dream, they departed for their country.

APPEARANCE	CELEBRATES	CHRISTMAS	JANUARY
BAPTISM	CHRIST	FEAST	MAGI
BLESSING	CHRISTIAN	HUMAN	REMOVE

S	T	C	V	V	I	B	Q	Q	M	J	A
E	N	W	H	W	L	L	A	S	S	C	A
T	A	H	W	S	K	E	A	Z	I	H	R
A	I	F	U	A	I	S	P	U	T	R	E
R	T	N	V	M	M	S	P	F	P	I	M
B	S	J	O	T	A	I	E	O	A	S	O
E	I	P	T	S	G	N	A	B	B	T	V
L	R	G	T	I	I	G	R	J	K	P	E
E	H	R	S	R	Y	R	A	U	N	A	J
C	C	H	A	H	A	P	N	A	K	R	B
Z	R	M	E	C	B	V	C	U	I	Z	B
N	E	P	F	U	V	B	E	T	C	S	B