

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF EASTER AND THE MOVEABLE FEASTS

Know, dear brethren, (brothers and sisters),
that, as we have rejoiced at the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ,
so by leave of God's mercy
we announce to you also the joy of his Resurrection,
who is our Savior.

On the eighteenth day of February will fall Ash Wednesday,
and the beginning of the fast of the most sacred Lenten season.

On the fifth day of April you will celebrate with joy Easter Day,
the Paschal feast of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the fourteenth day of May, (On the seventeenth day of May,) *
will be the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.

On the twenty-fourth day of May, the feast of Pentecost.

On the seventh day of June, the feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.

On the twenty-ninth day of November, the First Sunday of Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ,
to whom is honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.



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The Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord, also known as Three Kings Day, falls on Sunday, January 4, 2026. Beginning with the 1970 liturgical year (which commenced on November 30, 1969), the feast was moved in the United States (and elsewhere in the Latin Rite) to the first Sunday following January 1. Epiphany lasts seven days, ending on January 11, 2026.

Significance of Epiphany in Christian Tradition: This holy day marks the arrival of the Magi to worship the Baby Jesus and the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as the Savior of the world. Longstanding tradition connects the Epiphany with two additional events: the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan, and Christ's first public miracle at Cana. Each reflects a moment of divine revelation.

Three Wise Men or Magi: Although little is known about the Three Wise Men, tradition provides us with their names: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. Their journey is central to the Feast of the Three Kings 2026, highlighting the global acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah. Tradition venerates the Three Wise Men as saints, because they not only recognized Christ but also revealed him to the world. Their visit symbolizes the Gentiles finding Jesus (Isa. 11:10; Matt. 28:18-20) and expressing, through their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, who he is: King, God, and Savior (Isa. 60:6; Matt. 2:11). In doing so, they show that Christ himself is the greatest gift to all humanity.

Different Cultures Observe Epiphany in various ways: In the United States, Catholic families may celebrate with Epiphany chalk blessings, marking their homes with a special blessing. Three Kings Day (*Dia de los Reyes*), includes parades and gifts for children. Eastern Christians, including Eastern Catholics, focus on the baptism of Jesus, with water blessings in churches and rivers. In France, families enjoy the French King Cake (*Galette des Rois*), with a hidden figurine of Baby Jesus inside. Spanish-speaking countries celebrate *Los Reyes Magos* with festivities and Three Kings gifts for children. Special meals like roasted meats, symbolize the Magi's generosity.

The Star of Bethlehem was likely not a miraculous light moving across the sky, but a real astronomical event, most likely involving the planet Jupiter. Ancient Babylonian astrologers, like the Magi, would have interpreted Jupiter's rare movements as omens signaling the birth of a new king in the region of Judea. This interpretation fits both the Gospel account and known celestial events around 2 BC, offering a historically grounded explanation for why the Magi set out in search of the newborn Messiah. While some propose that the star was a miraculous light guiding their every step, the biblical text doesn't support this interpretation. Instead, the Magi understood the star as a sign of a Jewish royal birth. Since they had to ask for directions, they weren't being led by the star. After learning the prophecy pointing to Bethlehem, only then did they see the star again. Its reappearance was a joyful coincidence, not an expected guide. Scripture describes the star as being in front of them and eventually over the place where the child was, but this fits the natural motion of a celestial object in the night sky, not a miraculous movement.

Gifts of Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh symbolize: **Gold**, Christ's kingship; **Frankincense**, His divinity; **Myrrh**, His future sacrifice and death on the cross.

Christ's Revelation to the World

Epiphany 2026 is a time to celebrate Christ's revelation to the world, offering a beautiful conclusion to the Christmas season. Whether through traditions like the King Cake, prayers, or gifts, this feast invites all to reflect on the light of Christ shining in their lives.



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Leader

Peace be to this house and to all who dwell here.

All

And may all who enter experience Christ's blessing.

Leader

Let us pray

O Lord, grant that your blessing may rest on this home and all who dwell within it. May Christ who was made manifest to the nations through the star of Bethlehem dwell with us always. Bless this chalk that it may be used as a sign of your protection. May this home be filled with the light of Christ, and may our comings and goings be guided by his love. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All

Amen.

The leader then writes the Epiphany

inscription over the main door using the blessed chalk:

20 + C + M + B + 25 (INSERT THE CURRENT YEAR)

Inscription Meaning

The numbers represent the year, and the letters stand for "Christus Mansionem Benedicat" ("May Christ bless this house"), as well as the traditional names of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior, Balthasar).

Leader

May Christ bless this house and remain with us throughout the new year.

All

Amen.