

Epiphany

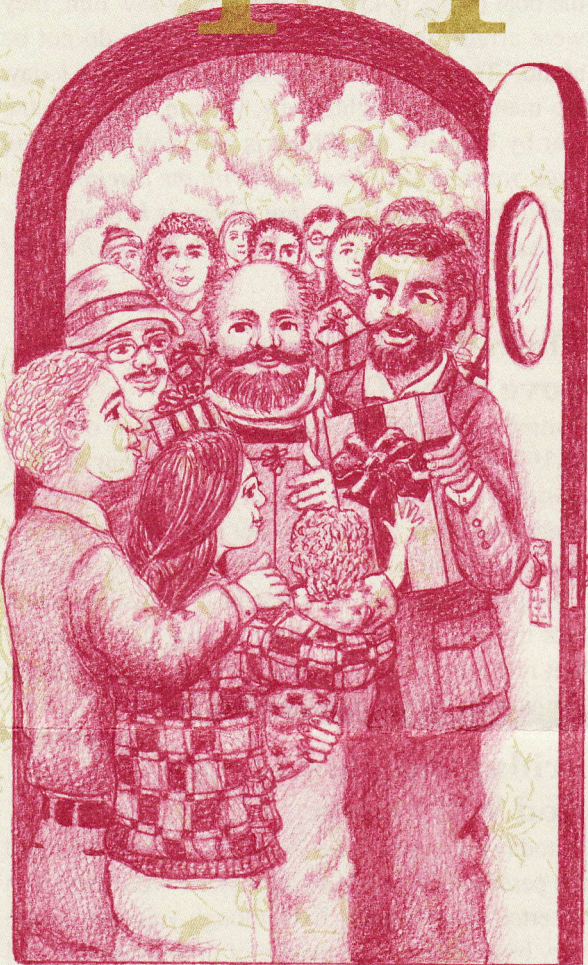
of the Lord

Welcome to All

Bless our house, dear Lord.
Bless every person who lives here.
Bless every person who enters our door.
Help us to welcome each one as though
we were welcoming you.

We recall how the Holy Family
received the three kings on that day
so long ago.
Your example shows us that all are welcome
in your heart
and all are to be welcomed in our households.

Help us to make our home a place of peace.
Remind us that it is to be a center of joy.
Show us how to make it a home where love
of God and love of others is lived each day.
Help us to be like Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.
Amen.



January 6, 2008 **The Epiphany of the Lord**

Saint Paul's letter to the Ephesians (Ephesians 3:2–3a), written when he was in prison, helps us to understand today's solemnity of Epiphany. Paul reminds his listeners that the reason he had been preaching to the Gentiles was because Jesus came to this earth for all human beings, not just the Jewish people. We are all co-heirs, members of the same body, he said. The Greek word which we pronounce as *epiphany* means "manifestation or revelation." Today we celebrate that the Messiah was revealed for all people, and so Mary and Joseph welcomed the three travelers from foreign lands into their makeshift home (Matthew 2:1–12).

There are many wonderful family customs for this day that originated in the Eastern Church. One tradi-

tion is to bless every doorway in your home that leads to outside. Mark it with chalk overhead with the year (2008) and the letters C M B for Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, the three kings. This says that in this household the Lord is always welcome; in every house where the Lord lives, all are welcome. You can use the prayer above as part of your blessing ceremony.

Your family can also make gold paper crowns as a centerpiece for the table. Another special custom is the king's cake. In your dessert cake for today, cut a slit and hide a bean or a toy crown. Whoever gets this piece of cake gets to be king or queen of the household for the rest of the day. Just be careful that no one chokes on the "prize" when eating the cake!

This Week at Home

Monday, January 7

Be Open to Change

Saint Raymond was a brilliant lawyer who was most comfortable spending his time on study and research. However, on many occasions he was called to render services such as leading a diocese as bishop and becoming the head of his Dominican Order. There are times in our life when we are asked or even told to do something we'd rather not do. Sometimes saying "yes" will open a door that leads to something or someone we would never have known otherwise. Try to be open to new things, new challenges. It is one of the ways to grow.

Tuesday, January 8

Feeding the Hungry

In today's Gospel (Mark 6:34–44) the crowds had stayed late because they were so hungry for Jesus' words. Now they needed another kind of food. With five loaves and two fish, Jesus gave the huge crowd more than enough to eat. We each have hungers: for companionship or love, for acceptance or forgiveness, even hunger for food and shelter. What are you most hungry for? When you help another person fill his or her hunger, you may find that you satisfy some of your own. *God our Father, I want to serve you by reaching out to help someone this week with a meal, with my time, or with my friendship. Help me do this, through Christ our Lord. Amen.*



Wednesday, January 9

Do Not Be Afraid

Jesus walked on the water to reach the disciples in the boat (Mark 6:45–52). When they saw him, they were afraid. Jesus said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." These words are just as important to us today. No matter what frightens us, we can overcome the fear by knowing that Christ is here with us. *Loving God, you sent your Son to be with the disciples that night. Increase my trust that Christ is here with me so that I can quiet my fear. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Thursday, January 10

Love Each Other

Today's reading from the first letter of John (4:19–5:4) says that if we don't love our brother whom we can see, we cannot love God whom we cannot see. John is talking about more than our blood relatives. Think of someone whom you find difficult. That person may or may not be a family member. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you take steps to make that relationship a little better. Think of three things you will do to help make that happen.

Friday, January 11

God Will Listen

In today's Gospel, Luke 5:12–16, after Jesus cured the person suffering from leprosy, he went away to a deserted place to pray. Even though you may have a very busy weekend, plan a bit of time when you will find a quiet place and talk with God. That's what prayer is—talking with God. Share what your week was like. Ask for what you need. Thank God for all the good things that happened this week.

Saturday, January 12

For What Do You Pray?

The first letter of John gives us such incredible words of reassurance (5:14–21). If we ask God for anything, he will hear us. The question is whether or not we hear God's answer. What are you asking of God today? Whatever it is, God hears, but the answer is not always what we want or expect. Sometimes that can be hard to understand. We must place our needs before the Lord and then listen with humility and openness. The answer may not be what we want or what we think is best, but it will be the right answer.

