

Epiphany Celebration Dinner



Feast Day
January 6 or 7

[Overview](#)

The purpose of the Epiphany Dinner (also known as 12th Night Dinner or Three Kings Dinner) is to provide an intentional time for family to gather to close out the Christmas Season. While Nativity is celebration on the physical *birth* of Christ, Epiphany is the celebration of the *manifestation* of Christ in the world and cosmos (as signified by the star). In the Western Church, we celebrate the day by reflecting on the journey of the three wise men. In the Eastern Church, it is celebrated by reflecting on the story of the Baptism of Christ. The West celebrates Baptism on the Sunday following Epiphany.

Before the dinner, we generally take down our Christmas Tree and most of the decorations. During the dinner, we read a devotional and discuss the story of the three wise men and their journey to Bethlehem. I included the devotional below making it easy for families to follow. Because the Kings are from the East, we generally make an eastern curry with rice. We also bake a Kings Cake and hide an almond in it and declare whoever gets it as this year's king or queen. To keep it simple use an easy cinnamon roll recipe. We also enjoy some prosecco or craft beer to celebrate the New Year.

It is important to note that in today's consumer driven culture, Christmas season begins on Black Friday. The month of December is full of excitement, celebration, Christmas songs on the radio, making cookies, shopping, and driving around to see the lights. The culture has made it really fun, but it feels like Christmas abruptly ends on Christmas Day or drifts off a few days later. There never feels like a full closure to the season. Celebrating Epiphany together will provide a nice sense of closure for your family.

For Christians, the month of December is also Advent. Similar to Lent, it is a time to prepare, sacrifice, and focus on almsgiving. The true Christmas season actually begins on Christmas Eve and ends on Epiphany. This provides a nice extension for those who love Christmas. There are several twelve day devotionals you find online to celebrate this season in fullness.

As for the ceremony, we have found it works best to not be too liturgical *or too free form*. Everyone should be seated at the table. You need a structure, but ability to be flexible and let it flow. Kids attention spans tend to be short, so it is best to keep each section moving and to read them. Below you'll find how we structure the ceremony. Relax and have fun. The leader will read everything in non bold text, everyone can read the bolded text.

Introduction

May the Lord be with you

And also with you.

Let us Pray:

O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the Peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Lighting of the twelve candles

Today, on this twelfth night, we mark the end of the Christmas season and the beginning of Epiphany. A new season of light. As the days get longer with new light, we reflect on how God appears in all of creation. In the cosmos, you lead the wise men by a radiant star. On the earth, you used water to manifest yourself into creation. And in this home, your holy spirit resides in us. Together, in your presence, we gather to commemorate a new season and new year by taking time to bless our home, each other and those who enter it.

Song & Action

Peace be to this house.
And to all who dwell herein.

Nations shall come to your light
And kings to the brightness of your rising

I will give you as a light to the nations
That my salvation may reach to the end of the earth

From the rising of the sun to the setting my Name shall be great among nations
And in every place incense shall be offered to my Name, and a pure offering

For my Name shall be great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts.

From the east came the Magi to Bethlehem to adore the Lord; and opening their treasures they offered precious gifts: gold for the great King, incense for our high priest, and myrrh in symbol of His burial.

For kids, show them the three gifts. [Gold](#). [Frankensense](#). [Myrrh](#).

We also get kids gold chocolate coins from Trader Joes.

Reading: Matthew 2:1-12. (We actually skip this with our toddlers)

Play or Sing the Song "We Three Kings"

Closing & Blessing

Leave the table and go to the front door with [Chalk](#). The chalking of the doors has been a tradition for several centuries in the Western Church. We include our kids by having them help with the chalking.

In the spirit of the Magi we come to our homes seeking the light of Christ.

O God, who by the guidance of a star manifested your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we who know you by faith may also attain the vision of Christ's glorious majesty. Let us pray for our homes.

Lord bless the <<last name>> home for the coming <<current>> year. May those who inhabit them be blessed in health and balance, generosity and hospitality, encouragement and resilience, understanding and love. Fill our homes with the light of Christ that we may bring warmth to those in need. Lay a foundation of humility and mercy. May all who come to our homes this year rejoice to find Christ living among us; and may we seek and serve, in everyone we meet, that same Jesus who is your incarnate Word, now and forever. Amen.

In our homes, light has come.

Christus mansionem benedicat. "May Christ bless this house."

Chalk the Door: 20 + C + M + B + XX

20 = first two numbers in the year

XX = write the last two numbers in the year (i.e. 21, 22, 23)

During Dinner

Create a 2021 prayer list. Think about people or situations that naturally come up (i.e. families, adults, children, nations, upcoming life events). Think of those who are sick, weary, dying, suffering, or afflicted.

Create a 2021 charity list. Think about specific charities or causes that you feel led to give to in 2021. Assess your upcoming yearly budget and calculate what you feel led to give to each charity/cause. Think of charities/causes where you feel led to give more, and ones you feel led to reallocate those resources elsewhere.

For Baptism Sunday - Art & Reflection on Baptism Icon

On this feast day, we reflect on the icon portraying the Baptism of Christ, where the earth was sanctified, waters blessed, heaven Enlightened, and humankind set loose from the bitter tyranny of evil. In shame, sin and nakedness, we hide ourselves like Adam. Yet unashamed in glory, purity and nakedness, Christ's shows himself, the beauty of an undefiled human. In your baptism, creation was baptized into your pureness. Help us be reminded of our baptism and that you do not see human nature as entirely corrupt, but rather beautifully cherished because we were created in your image. Lover of mankind, for the coming year, help us to walk unashamed and be restored to our original beauty. In your Holy Name, Amen.



Painted by the hand of Jordan Bronston