

The 'Three Wise Men' and Epiphany House Blessings

Traditionally, the three wise men have been known as Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, and their initials have been inscribed on lintels at this time of year. Conveniently, C, M and B are also the initials of the Latin phrase 'Christus Mansionem Benedicat', meaning 'Christ, bless this house'.

May the Magi, who were the first Gentiles to worship our Lord, pray for us as we seek Christ's blessing on our homes in this new year.

Living the Word: Isaiah 60: 1 – 6

The Jews had returned from their Exile in Babylon and were beginning to realise the universal task of Israel. The cries of joy at all these curious camels and exotic nations streaming to Jerusalem denote that task. There is a similar opening out for us, too: Christ brings salvation not just for us and not only to those who come to our church, but to the wider world. The Epiphany is the time when Jesus 'went public' and made an epiphany – a showing – of himself as the Saviour of the World, symbolised by the coming of the Wise Men from the East, the first people from outside his own race to greet him.

From the Fathers

'Today the Magi gaze in deep wonder at what they see: heaven on earth, earth in heaven, man in God, God in man, one whom the whole universe cannot contain now enclosed in a tiny body. As they look, they believe and do not question, as their symbolic gifts bear witness: incense for God, gold for a king, myrrh for one who is to die.'

Peter Chrysologus (fifth century bishop)

Sunday 4th January 2026

Epiphany

Gospel: Matthew 2: 1 – 12



St Matthew's Gospel tells us that the Magi 'took out of their treasures gold, frankincense and myrrh'. Their treasures would have contained many other precious items suitable for gifts but 'out of their treasures' they selected three appropriate to the child they found in the stable. In the treasure chest of our lives the gifts that we can give Christ change throughout our lives. At certain times we might have skills we can offer, at others money to give, and at others time to volunteer. For the Magi, Christ was found in the manger; for us Christ is found in his mystical body, the Church. He is also to be found in every person in need; those whom he calls his 'little ones'. All of us have spiritual as well as material gifts to give, not least the faith and love which Jesus so generously shares with us.