

Epiphany

Epiphany is a Christian festival celebrated on 6th January.

In some countries, Epiphany is called the Feast of Kings because, according to the Christmas Story, it is the day that the Three Kings, also known as the Magi or the Three Wise Men, arrived at the stable where Baby Jesus lay.

The Three Kings were called Balthasar, Melchoir and Caspar.

Epiphany is not the same as Twelfth Night. In Medieval times, days ended at sunset and they counted days and nights separately. Christmas Night began at sunset on 25th December, and the first day of Christmas was 26th December (St Stephen's or Boxing Day). Twelfth Night starts at sunset on 5th January, before the Twelfth Day, Epiphany, on 6th January.



- 1 Sit down with the children and show them the series of pictures overleaf. You may wish to lay the sheets out either on a table or the floor, and then read the story.
- 2 Ask the children the following questions and discuss:
Which pictures did you like? Which pictures didn't you like?
- 3 The Three Kings brought gifts to Baby Jesus. We give presents at Christmas.
What do you think is good about giving presents?
- 4 These gifts had a special meaning to the life of Baby Jesus. Read the story and discuss what the gifts tell us.
- 5 There is a carol all about the wise men's journey and their gifts.
What do you think it is?

Epiphany



**One night the Three Kings
saw a bright star.**

**They knew this meant a
great king had been born.**

**They set off on a long
journey to find Him.**



The Three Kings followed the star by day and by night.

At last they reached Baby Jesus.

They offered Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

These gifts had special meanings.



Gold was for a King. We still use gold now as a symbol of money and power.

Frankincense was for a God. Some churches use incense today as a symbol of worship.

Myrrh was for death. It is an embalming oil and was a symbol that Jesus would die for the sins of everyone.



**The Twelfth Night is the night
before Epiphany.**

**Some Christians celebrate
this as the last day of
Christmas festivities.**

**It is traditionally the night
many of us take down our
Christmas decorations.**



Today many people celebrate Epiphany as the day of the Feast of Kings.

In some countries, a coin is placed in a cake and the one who finds the coin is crowned king, or queen, for the day.