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YOUTH FAITH FORMATION

Catechetical

Family: A Community of Life and Love

January 2021

Special points of interest:

- Jan. 1st: What else do we celebrate on New Year's Day?
- Jan. 3rd: Epiphany—Who Were the Three Kings?
- Jan. 10th: The Baptism of the Lord
- Is Ordinary Time ordinary?
- Jan. 18th: Dr Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Jan. 22nd: Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children
- Rosary for Life
- We celebrate the Saints of January

The usual hustle and bustle of Christmas may not be as hectic this year. Twinkling lights and decorated evergreen trees bring a special excitement in what has been a time of great challenge. We look to the light and find meaning in the hope that this season brings, especially this year.

We know Christmas does not end at midnight on Christmas day.

January 1st—It's Not Just New Year's Day

January 1st is the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God! A solemnity is a feast day of the highest rank!

On this holy feast day we take a moment as

But, did you know that Christmas lasts for several weeks after December 25th?

The Christmas season actually ends **Sunday, January 10th which is the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord** and the first Sunday of "Ordinary" time.

So let's keep those trees up and lighted and keep our eyes fixed on THE light that shines in the darkness.

(<https://www.catholicscomehome.org/>)



"In him was life and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it."

John 1:4-6



January 3rd— Epiphany: aka Little Christmas



Cultures around the world celebrate this day in special ways. In Mexico it is known as El Dia de los Reyes or the day of the Three Kings. . Just who are these men? The scriptures tell us they are

“magi from the east.” Magi were members of the priestly caste of ancient Syria or “wise men from the east who came to adore Jesus in Bethlehem.” (New Advent) The bible doesn’t mention the number of visitors but we assume there were three because of the three gifts they brought: gold, frankincense and myrrh. Many children receive gifts on this day in memory of the gifts brought to infant Jesus. Tradition tells us their names: Balthasar, Melchior and Caspar. They became

aware that the appearance of a new and brightly shining star signaled the birth of a of a King (Numbers 24:17) They set out on a long journey to visit this newborn King.”The star which they had seen in the east went before them until it came and stood over where the child was.” (Matthew 2:9) What is the significance of these three men who were shown the way to the Messiah ? These men were Gentiles, or not of the Jewish people

“Where is the newborn
King of the Jews? We
saw his star at its rising
and have come to do
him homage.”

Matthew 2:2

The Magi Brought Gifts

The Father revealed to us that His Son, the long awaited Messiah, came for all people of every race and every nation and for all time—to whomever would accept him.

Gold: represents Kingship

Frankincense: a symbol of a priestly role

Myrrh: used for embalming in

death. Many suggest a pre-figurement of the death Jesus would suffer.

(biblicalarcheology.org)

A bilingual book about the Three Kings: [On Three Kings Day / El Dia de los Tres Reyes Magos \(THE EPIPHANY\)](#)

Blessing of the House on Epiphany

The Epiphany house blessing of the door is a really great Catholic tradition for families. All you need is a piece of chalk! You can take your piece of chalk to Mass with you on the Epiphany and have your priest bless it, or you can bless the chalk yourself. . (catholicicing.com) Don’t forget to use the year “2021”

Use and share these resources to bless your home:

[Blessing of the Chalk](#)

[Blessing of the House](#)

The Baptism of the Lord—January 10

Today the Church celebrates the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. This brings to an end the season of Christmas.

We see this as the second time Jesus, the Son of God, is made known to the world. The first time was at his Nativity and the second time at his Baptism.

Present at the Baptism of the Lord was the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Baptism of Jesus reminds us of our own Baptism. The Holy Spirit descends upon us, as the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus and this same Holy Spirit dwells within our souls.

The Father calls Jesus His “beloved Son.” At our Baptism we, too, become children of God.

At the Baptism of Jesus the heavens were opened. At our Baptism, heaven is open to us.

The waters of the Jordan River were sanctified, or made holy, by Jesus. At our Baptism, holy water is a symbol of our cleansing from all sin and rebirth into the family of God.

Mark 1:9-11

[Link: Activities for the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord](#)

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.—January 18

Martin Luther King Jr. was an American Christian minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the civil rights movement from 1955 until his assassination in 1968.

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. Darkness cannot drive out darkness. Only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can do that.”

Dr. King was known for his peaceful protests against injustice. He galvanized the people of America in the struggle for civil rights.

[Link: Martin Luther King](#)

Why Is Ordinary Time Called ordinary?

Ordinary Time is called “ordinary” not because it is common but simply because the weeks of Ordinary Time are numbered. The Latin word ordinalis, which refers to numbers in a series, stems from the Latin word ordo, from which we get the English word order.

Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children—Jan. 22

A great prayer for life is urgently needed, a prayer which will rise up throughout the world. Through special initiatives and in daily prayer, may an impassioned plea rise to God, the Creator and lover of life, from every Christian community, from every group and association, from every family and from the heart of every believer.

Pope Saint John Paul II

Links:

[Day of Prayer](#)

[Pro Life Rosaries](#)



Family: A Community of Life and Love

Created by the Catechetical Office Family Catechesis Advisory Committee

Members of the Committee:
Sr. Joan Curtin, C.N.D.
Sr. Zelide Ceccagno, MSCS
Sr. Mary Crucifix Pandullo, CSJB
Mrs. Margaret Hoblin
Mrs. Janan Lane
Sr. Nancy Elizabeth Doran, SSC

Contact and address:

Sr. Nancy Elizabeth Doran, S.S.C.,
Editor

Director, Family Catechesis

Catechetical Office

1011 First Avenue

New York, New York 10022

Phone: 212-371-1000, X 2867

E mail: nancy.doran@archny.org

Feast Days and Saints We Honor During the Month of January

Jan. 1: Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Jan. 2: St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen

Jan. 3: The Epiphany of the Lord

Jan. 25: The Conversion of St. Paul

Jan. 4: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Jan. 26: Sts. Timothy and Titus

Jan. 5: St. John Neumann

Jan. 27: St. Angela Merici

Jan. 10: The Baptism of the Lord

Jan. 28: St. Thomas Aquinas

Jan. 12: St. Marguerite Bourgeoys,
C.N.D.

Jan. 21: St. Agnes

Jan. 22: Day of Prayer for the
Protection of the Unborn

Jan. 23: St. Vincent, St. Marianne Cope

For more on the lives of
the Saints

[Franciscan Media](#)

[Catholic.Org](#)

Resources to inspire and encourage:

Books:

I Would Climb Any Mountain for You by the Sisters for Life. This full colored illustrated story book for moms and children imagines their adventures of their first nine months together before meeting for the first time.

Family Movies: *Joseph of Nazareth*.

Pope Francis has declared a year in honor of St. Joseph. Watch this very special movie about the life of this "just man." [Watch now.](#)

Reborn: You, Your Child and the Heart of Baptism View this beautiful reminder of the gift of our Baptism presented on FORMED.

Reborn explores the deeply personal power of Baptism, bringing to light the spiritual reality in this first sacrament received by the Christian. Presented is the foundational teaching of the Church on Baptism including its place in Scripture and Tradition.

View [Reborn, You, Your Child and the Heart of Baptism on Formed](#)

