



WHAT'S
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Little Christmas brings a visit from the Three Kings.

Was Jesus baptized?

The Power of Prayer and the Sanctity of Human Life

What was so special about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?

a community of life and love

family

January 1 Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God



JANUARY

2022

PLAN ON IT!

January 1st

The Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God falls on a Saturday. This means it is not a Holy Day of Obligation. (My Pastor calls it a Day of Privilege).

But it's also New Year's Day. Can you think of a better way to start the New Year than by spending an hour with Mary, our heavenly Mother, and her Son, Our Lord, thanking them for tender mercies and receiving the power and strength of God's life within us? Editor



In the Holy Roman Catholic Church, a solemnity is a feast day of the highest rank, celebrating a mystery of faith such as the Trinity, an event in the life of Jesus, his mother Mary, his legal father Joseph, or another important saint.

Long ago in the year 431, there was a controversy among theologians over the role of Mary in the Catholic Church. They debated the question: Who is Mary in God's plan?

The bishops concluded that Mary is really the mother of Jesus and Jesus is really God. So it must be said that Mary is the Mother of God. The oldest Christian greeting of Mary was proclaimed when Mary's relative Elizabeth called her "Mother of my Lord." When Elizabeth welcomed Mary, she recognized both the great privilege God had given Mary and Mary's great faith in accepting it.

For centuries, Mary has been praised because she believed. She is Mother of God because of her faith in God. The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, celebrates Mary's faith and trust in God alone. The Church wants us to imitate her faith. (Loyola Press)

On this day, we are also reminded of the role that the Blessed Virgin played in the plan of our salvation. Christ's Birth was made possible by Mary's fiat: "Be it done unto me according to Thy word."

God bless us in 2022.



EPIPHANY

SUNDAY, JANUARY
2ND

What does the word “epiphany” mean? Choose # 1, 2, 3 or 4

1. a Christian feast day commemorating the manifestation of Christ to the gentiles in the persons of the Magi;
2. an appearance or manifestation, especially of a Diety; (THE Diety)
3. a sudden intuitive perception of or an insight into a reality or essential meaning of something;
4. all of the above.

If you chose # 4 you are correct.

What the Church celebrates today is the manifestation of our Lord to the whole world; after being made known to the shepherds of Bethlehem , He is revealed to the Magi who have come from the East to adore Him.

Christian tradition has always seen, in the Magi, the first fruits of the Gentiles; they lead in their wake all the peoples of the earth, and thus the Epiphany is an affirmation of universal salvation.

Epiphany, or Little Christmas, is a large celebration, especially in Spanish speaking countries. Things look different around the household: the infant Jesus, in the manger now, has a small gold crown and is wearing regal robes. The figures of the wise men have reached Bethlehem, completing the nativity scene.

The Church extends itself on Epiphany to the homes of the faithful. The custom of blessing the home on this day probably originated from these words in the Gospel, "And entering into the house, they found the Child with Mary, His Mother, and falling down they adored Him."

The priest blesses the house if he can be present, but if not, the father of the family may do so. He leads the family (and any guests who may have been invited for the occasion) from room to room, blessing each and inscribing the initials of the three Magi (Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar) above the doors with the chalk that has been previously blessed. The doors are inscribed with the following:

20 + C + M + B + __ (year)

The initials are separated by crosses and the year above the door. The initials CMB also stand for the words "*Christus Mansionem Benedicat*" which means "May Christ bless this house". This inscription above the entry of our house should be a reminder to us that we should be with and go to Christ in all our comings and goings. (Catholic Culture)

Catholic Social Teaching

1. Life and the Dignity of the Human Person
2. Family, Community and Participation
3. Solidarity

This month we will review the Church's teaching on **Rights and Responsibilities of the Human Person**

Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities--to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

Read more on this Catholic Social Teaching:

[Rights and Responsibilities - USCCB](#)



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Sunday, January 9th

The Baptism of Jesus

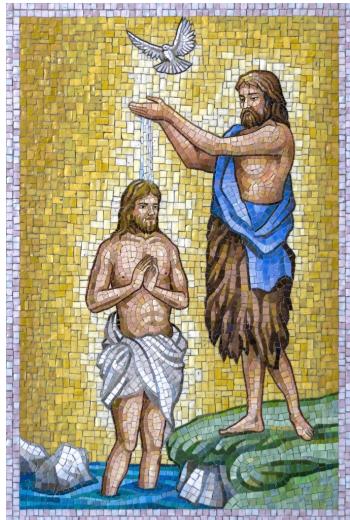
As we celebrate the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, it signifies the end of the Christmas season. The Baptism of the Lord is notable because it marks the beginning of Jesus' ministry and confirms his identity as the Son of God.

It happened in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. On coming up out of the water he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Mark 1:9-11)

Christ's baptism remarkably shows all three Persons of the Trinity at the same time: the Son being baptized, the Holy Spirit descending, and the Father speaking from the heavens. In this event, the Father and the Holy Spirit confirm the deity of Christ, and Jesus submits to his Father's will.

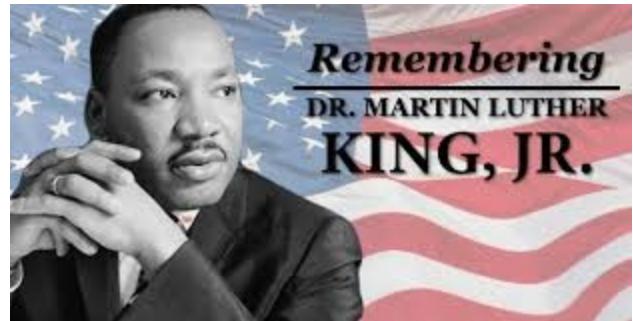
When Jesus comes to John, John hesitates to baptize him. John's is a baptism of repentance, and Jesus has nothing for which he needs to repent. Why then does Jesus insist on being baptized? By choosing to be baptized, Jesus fulfills all righteousness – preparing himself to be a perfect sacrifice for us.

As we reflect on Christ's baptism, we are reminded of our own baptism. Pope Benedict XVI said on the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord: "[Baptism] is communion with the One who conquered death and holds in his hand the keys of life. Belonging to this circle, to God's family, means being in communion with Christ, who is life and gives eternal love beyond death." (National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception)



Monday, January 17th

Martin Luther King Day



"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." (Lincoln Memorial, August 28, 1963)

Martin Luther King lived an extraordinary life. At 33 he was pressing the case of civil rights with President John F. Kennedy. At 34 he galvanized the nation with his "I Have A Dream" speech. At 35 he won the Nobel Peace Prize. At 39 he was assassinated but he left a legacy of hope that continues today. (Seattle Times)

Dr. King is widely regarded as America's pre-eminent advocate of nonviolence and one of the greatest nonviolent leaders in world history.

Drawing inspiration from both his Christian faith and the peaceful teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. King led a nonviolent movement in the late **1950s** and '**60s** to achieve legal equality for African-Americans in the United States. While others were advocating for freedom by "any means necessary," including violence, Martin Luther King, Jr. used the power of words and acts of nonviolent resistance, such as protests, grassroots organizing, and civil disobedience to achieve seemingly-impossible goals. He went on to lead similar campaigns against poverty and international conflict, always maintaining fidelity to his principles that men and women everywhere, regardless of color or creed, are equal members of the human family.

We honor Dr. King's memory by performing service to the poor and needy on his special day.

Read More: [The King Center](#)

**DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE LEGAL PROTECTION OF THE
UNBORN**
JANUARY 22

"The Rosary is a devotion strongly embraced by the pro-life movement. This is so for good reasons, because in the Hail Mary we praise a mother, and we worship the fruit of her womb. Our salvation began because a mother said yes to the life within her. In the Rosary we also say, "Pray for US sinners." We don't point the finger at others, but rather at ourselves. We know that sin is in the world but we start by repenting of the sin within us. That is the best way to rebuild the Culture of Life." Fr. Frank Pavone, Priests for Life

[Pro-Life Meditations on the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary](#)

The Annunciation: Mary is troubled by the angel's greeting yet rejoices to do God's will. Let us pray that those who are troubled by their pregnancy may have the grace to trust in God's will.

The Visitation: John the Baptist leapt for joy in his mother's womb. We pray that people may realize that abortion is not about children who "might" come into the world but is about children who are already in the world, living and growing in the womb, and are in danger of being killed.

The Nativity: God Himself was born as a child. The greatness of a person does not depend on size for the newborn King is very small. Let us pray for an end to prejudice against the tiny babies threatened by abortion.

The Presentation: The Child is presented in the Temple because the Child belongs to God. Children are not the property of their parents or their government. They—and we—belong to God Himself.

The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple: The boy Jesus was filled with wisdom because He is God. Let us pray that all people may see the wisdom of His teachings about the dignity of life and may understand that this teaching is not an opinion but the truth. (Priests for Life)

Click on: [Archdiocesan Respect Life Office - March for Life](#)

For the children:

[Mother Mary Coloring Pages - Catholic Educators](#)

[Celebrating Three Kings Day With Kids](#)

Watch: [Three Kings Day for Kids](#)

Watch: [The Baptism of Jesus](#)

Watch: [The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.](#)



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**For more information
about the Saints and
Feast Days we honor this
month, visit:**

[www.franciscanmedia.org/
saint-of-the-day](http://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day)

www.catholic.org/saints

Books of interest:

**Saints and Feast Days—a
Resource and Activity
Book: Loyola Press**

