



LITTLE CHRISTMAS

LITURGY BYTES *by Michele Hall*



Traditionally, the feast of the Epiphany (also known as Little Christmas) is January 6th. In the US, it is celebrated on the Sunday between January 2 and January 8. The Epiphany marks the arrival of the visitors to where Jesus was born. They are mentioned in Scripture as the magi or kings. Although we do not know very much about them, we do know they brought three gifts to the baby Jesus: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The gold is a symbol of wealth and power, which identifies the person receiving it as royalty. Frankincense is a crystalized resinous sap of a tree that is used as incense and is a symbol of prayer. Lastly, the myrrh is also a resinous tree sap that was used in healing and also as an embalming ointment. I guess you might think myrrh is an unusual gift given to a child at the beginning of his life on earth. However, we are told that this gift foreshadowed Jesus' death.

A fun thing to do with your family each year on this day is to bless your front door. The Epiphany blessing is a simple blessing. You can also write on a poster or directly on your door (if you wish) the following:

20 + C + M + B + 24

It contains the first two digits of the year, cross, and the initials of the 3 Kings: Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar. Here is the simple prayer to bless your door:

Loving God, bless this household and all who enter. May we, and they, be blessed with health, goodness of heart, gentleness and seek to do your will. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.

Have a blessed, healthy, and happy 2025!