



# Merry Christmas ... Again!

CONNIE CLARK

Wouldn't it be great if Christmas lasted longer than one day? Actually, the Christmas season lasts from December 25 all the way until the feast of Jesus' baptism in early January. But many Christians do some of their biggest Christmas celebrating and merrymaking on the Feast of the Epiphany. That's when we remember the visit of the Magi [MAIGE-eye], or wise men, to baby Jesus.

the child was." The Magi were thrilled and happy to see Jesus, and they brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. These "kingly" presents are the reasons many people exchange gifts on the Epiphany. Another fun Epiphany tradition is a dessert called king cake. A bean or coin is baked inside, and whoever gets it is declared "king" for the day. Some families even make a gift of their king cake by cutting an extra slice to share with the first visitor who comes to the door.

This year we celebrate the Epiphany on January 7. So go ahead and make it a fun day at your house. Let it remind you to keep the joy of Jesus' birth in your heart all year long.

Why is this feast important? Think of it this way. When you were born, people probably came to visit. You probably weren't aware of it at the time, but having visitors is one way your parents showed the world you had arrived. We see the Magi's visit in the same sort of way. Because they traveled a long way to see

Jesus, their visit marked a special moment when God revealed his Son to the whole world!

But who were the Magi anyway? The Bible tells us these mysterious visitors came "from the East" to Jerusalem, looking for the newborn king. They followed a star to Bethlehem until it stopped "over the place where



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**Finding these words should be a piece of cake!** Discover 20 words about Epiphany hidden in the puzzle below. The answer key is on the next page.

A H C A V M E T H G I F T S Q W R P  
 V F G H E A L C L O B R S T J C D O  
 M A R C R G O E N L A M L A A E L P  
 Y B E A N I C V E D R R T R N L U J  
 S E D W N I S M I B Y L D A U E P E  
 T T I R E K O T Y S S E W N A B E G  
 E H D A Z Q I L M R I E M Y R R H Z  
 R L R E L O C N R A N T J T Y A B E  
 I E F G N C O L C E S J O K M T L A  
 O H A P B E T H L E H E M R Y E T S  
 U E R E W I S E M E N D E S S E R T  
 S M N C R D L M O D H S R K P U Q D  
 J E R U S A L E M P R N E W B O R N

### What do we mean by "epiphany"?

The word *epiphany* means "to shine on or to show." Jesus came for all people in all times and in all places. How can you see Jesus shining in your life today? Write or draw your ideas on a separate piece of paper.

### Gifts with meaning

The Magi's gifts had some important meanings. Gold was a gift given to kings. Frankincense is incense, the kind we use in church. It reminds us that our prayer is lifted up to heaven. And myrrh was used in burials, so it hinted at Jesus' future death and resurrection. A gift doesn't have to be big or expensive to mean a lot. It just needs to come from the heart. What kind of gifts will you give Jesus this year? Write or draw your ideas on a separate piece of paper.

- |           |              |            |           |
|-----------|--------------|------------|-----------|
| Bean      | Dessert      | January    | Newborn   |
| Bethlehem | East         | Jerusalem  | Star      |
| Celebrate | Frankincense | Magi       | Tradition |
| Christmas | Gifts        | Myrrh      | Visitors  |
| Coin      | Gold         | Mysterious | Wise Men  |

PHOTO: ETORRES/SHUTTERSTOCK

ANSWER TO Living the Liturgical Year puzzle

A H C A V M E T H G I F T S Q W R P  
V F G H E A L C L O B R S T J C D O  
M A R C R G O E N L A M L A A E L P  
Y B E A N I C V E D R R T R N L U J  
S E D W N I S M I B Y L D A U E P E  
T T I R E K O T Y S S E W N A B E G  
E H D A Z Q I L M R I E M Y R R H Z  
R L R E L O C N R A N T J T Y A B E  
I E F G N C O L C E S J O K M T L A  
O H A P B E T H L E H E M R Y E T S  
U E R E W I S E M E N D E S S E R T  
S M N C R D L M O D H S R K P U Q D  
J E R U S A L E M P R N E W B O R N