

ARISE AND SHINE!

On Epiphany, Christ is revealed to the world. The Magi offer gifts to their newborn King. The River Jordan leaps up to baptize Jesus. Water becomes wine at Cana. The star of Bethlehem drives away the darkness of night to welcome the Messiah, the Prince of Peace.

Epiphany is the merriest day of Christmastime. We can make our homes and neighborhoods glitter with gold and fragrantly smell from frankincense and myrrh. A big part of the Epiphany celebration is the blessing of the home in the new year. On a night when members of the household sit down to supper together, before dinner, divide a cake into as many pieces as you have people. Hide a dried bean or coin in one of them. At dessert, pass the pieces around. Whoever finds the piece becomes the queen or king for the night and gets to lead the blessing. Give the royal person a crown to wear, a piece of chalk and an evergreen sprig with a bowl of water.

Gather at the front door and pray the Lord's Prayer. The crowned person writes in chalk over the door

20 + C + M + B + 04

The numbers should be those of the new year. The crosses stand for the four seasons. The letters stand for the traditional names of the three Magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar.

Say this prayer: Lord God of heaven and earth, you revealed your only-begotten Son to every nation by the guidance of a star. Bless this house and all who inhabit it. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our concern for others may reflect your love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Now move through the rooms of the house, and sprinkle them with water, and sing "We Three Kings" and "Joy to the World" to bring Christ's blessing to your home in this glad new year of grace.

