



THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

Introduction, The Baptism of
Jesus, and The Epiphany



THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS—INTRODUCTION

- The season of Christmas and its surrounding days include a number of major feasts and other special commemorations.
- Two individuals
- Four key moments in life of Jesus
- One scriptural recognition
- Several minor feasts and recognitions as well

St Stephen, Deacon and Martyr: Dec 26

St John, Apostle and Evangelist: Dec 27

The Holy Innocents: Dec 28

The Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ: Jan 1

The Epiphany of Our Lord Jesus Christ: Jan 6

The Baptism of our Lord: First Sunday after Epiphany

Candlemas/The Presentation of Our Lord: Feb 2



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Today: The Epiphany & Baptism of Jesus

January 15th: St Stephen, St John, & Holy Innocents

January 22nd: Holy Name & Candlemas



THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS—THE EPIPHANY

January 6

Matthew 2.1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

“And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of
Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.” ’



THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS—THE EPIPHANY

January 6

Matthew 2.1-12

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.



THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS—THE EPIPHANY

What is included:

- Come from the East seeking the “king of the Jews”
- Followed a star to Jerusalem and then to Bethlehem and Jesus’ house
- Gold, frankincense, and myrrh

What is not included:

- When they arrived
- How many there were
- Kings
- Shepherds, angels, and other nativity staples



THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS—THE EPIPHANY

O God, by the leading of a star
you manifested your only Son to
the peoples of the earth: Lead us,
who know you now by faith, to
your presence, where we may see
your glory face to face; through
Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives
and reigns with you and the Holy
Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Earliest mention is 361

Was often tied to Baptism of Jesus

Sometimes also the Wedding at Cana

Celebrates Jesus being known to the Gentiles

Transition from a God of one community to a
God of the world

THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS—THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

Does not hold a fixed date

Not included until 1979 BCP

Was often tied to Epiphany

1928 BCP is based on Jesus lost at the Temple

Assigned to 1st Sunday after Epiphany to keep the connection, but raise its importance



THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS—THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

Does not hold a fixed date

Not included until 1979 BCP

Was often tied to Epiphany

All three persons of the Trinity are
present

Included in each synoptic Gospel

All three mention the spirit/dove

Matthew: Long temptation narrative

Mark: Temptation and calling of Simon and
Andrew

Luke: Genealogy and then temptation

*John references the spirit descending upon
Jesus, but no mention of baptism



THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS—THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

Does not hold a fixed date

Not included until 1979 BCP

Was often tied to Epiphany

Baptism by John

Tied to Jewish practices of ablutions

Intended for the remission of sins

Jesus insists, “in order to fulfill all righteousness.” Lk 3.15



THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS—THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen .

Holy Spirit tied to Jesus at his baptism

Holy Spirit given to Church at Pentecost

Holy Spirit given to us at baptism as we are bound to Jesus

“You are sealed by the Holy Spirit in baptism, and marked as Christ’s own for ever.” BCP 308



THE SPECIAL DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

January 8: Baptism of Jesus & Epiphany

January 15: St Stephen, St John, & The Holy Innocents

January 22: Holy Name & Candlemas