

## The Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord

The word “Epiphany” is derived from the Greek word “ἐπιφάνεια”, which means “manifestation” or “showing forth”. Epiphany, together with Easter and Pentecost, were for several centuries the chief Feasts of the Church.

The Feast of the Epiphany of our Lord was first celebrated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.✠D. by the Eastern Church as a commemoration of the Baptism of Jesus. In the Eastern Church the solemn blessing of the water occurs on Epiphany (note the connection to Jesus’ Baptism). Later in the Eastern Church the observance of the Incarnation of the Christ is added to the Epiphany observance.

The Feast of Epiphany was observed in the Western Church in the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.✠D., where it was associated with the visit of the Magi and the manifestation of God Incarnate to the Gentiles, as it is observed among us today.

It is not until the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.✠D. that Christmass, celebrated on December 25<sup>th</sup>, emerges as a Feast equal to Epiphany in both the East and the West, although in some Eastern traditions January 6<sup>th</sup> is still the day on which the Incarnation is celebrated.

It is the tradition of the Western Church to publicly announce the Moveable Feasts of the Church Year after the reading of the Gospel on Epiphany.

### Cover Art – *The Magi visit the Christ Child*

Cathédrale St-Julien, Le Mans, France - 12th century A.✠D.

This window adorns the north nave wall of the Cathédrale St-Julien in Le Mans, France. The Cathedral is named after St. Julien, the first Bishop of Le Mans (4th century). The Gothic styled east end (built 1220 - 1254 A.✠D.) of the Cathédrale is called the Lady or Chevet Chapel. There 47 "Musician Angels" are depicted in fresco on its ceiling. The nave (dedicated April 25, 1120 A.✠D.) is very classic Romanesque. The first church was built on the site in 834 A.✠D.

## The Feast



of the Epiphany of  
our Lord Jesus Christ