**Times and Seasons**

**Part 1 - Advent to the Presentation of Christ**

**Section 3**

**Epiphany to Candlemas**

Epiphany of our Lord

*January 6*

**Notes**

*The Feast of the Epiphany is the climax of Christmas. Indeed it is an anticipation of the parousia, a foretaste of the fulfilment of the promise of Easter, of Christ's manifestation to all people. It is the most ancient date associated with the celebration of Christmas and in the Orthodox tradition today is the primary Christmas feast.*

*This feast is traditionally a three fold celebration of the Magi's guidance by the star to the Infant Christ, the Baptism of Christ and the Wedding at Cana, all of which are manifestations of Christ – and the Lectionary provides for this in the days that follow.*

*It is a tradition in many churches between Christmas and Epiphany to move the figures of the Magi closer and closer to the crib each day until they finally arrive on the feast of the Epiphany: it is something in which children can be easily involved.*

*The Feast of the Epiphany may also be transferred to the nearest Sunday.*

Material for a Celebration of the Eucharist

on the Feast of the Epiphany

***Introduction to the Penitential Rite***

Dear friends, the light of Jesus shines out as he calls all nations and peoples to his dawning brightness. Let us bring the darkness of our sin to be transformed by the light of Christ.

***Penitential Sentences***

*Either the Penitential Sentences in Holy Eucharist 2004*

*Or:*

Lord Jesus, you judge your people with justice,

your heart overflows with love.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, your justice shall flourish,

your peace till the moon fails.

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you save the poor when they cry,

you have pity on the weak and helpless.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

*Or:*

Though night still covers the earth and darkness the peoples,

let your glory shine upon us.

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

All nations come to your light and kings to your dawning brightness.

Let your glory rise above us.

Christ, have mercy.  **Christ, have mercy.**

The riches of the sea will flow to you and the wealth of the nations come to you.

Let your glory shine in our midst.

Lord, have mercy.  **Lord, have mercy.**

***Intercessions***

*Invitation to Prayer*

Dear brothers and sisters, the light of Christ's glory has risen upon the world. Let us pray together for the world he has come to redeem, praying that the church will be a light to the nations.

*Petitions*

Let us pray for all the nations and leaders of the world: may the Lord scatter the darkness that covers the earth and divides the people, and gather us all into his fold. ***R.*** Lord of glory

**Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for those who do not know Christ: that, at his appearing, their hearts will overflow with joy. ***R.***

Let us pray for the church throughout the world: that we may be a radiant light, leading others to the Lord. ***R.***

Let us pray for our own parish community: that the promises of God may be fulfilled in us that we may bring the peace and light of Jesus to all who live in this place. ***R.***

Let us pray for all whose journey through life is difficult or burdened by suffering or illness: illumined by the light of faith, may they may rise as children of the day and walk in Christ's radiant glory. ***R.***

*Concluding Prayer*

Eternal God,

by the light of a star you guided the nations

to the dawning brightness of your Son,

and the Magi's gifts unfold the riches of his mission.

Listen to the prayers we offer in his name,

that all may be gathered into one

to enjoy for ever the glory of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

***Preface***

*For use from the Feast of the Epiphany and Epiphanytide*

And now we celebrate the revelation of your glory

made manifest through the Word made flesh.

The wise men worshipped him as king of all the nations.

At the River Jordan you commanded us to listen to your beloved Son

as he emerged from the waters of baptism.

At Cana he reveleaed his power to restore the new creation

in the water made wine.

You have anointed him as your Messiah,

Who brings hope and salvation to the world.

*For use Between the Baptism of Christ and the Presentation of Christ*

And now we give you thanks

because through the Word made flesh

your glory shines through the world.

In him the new creation has been revealed,

a new light has dawned

and all the nations are brought out of darkness.

***Invitation to the Lord's Prayer***

*Either:*

Led by the light of faith, let us lift up our eyes to heaven,

and call out to God our Father.

Or:

In Christ we have received the Spirit of adoption as sons and daughters of God, and so we dare to pray:

**Our Father…**

***Dismissal***

Enlightened by Christ and anointed by the Spirit,

go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

The Epiphany Blessing of Chalk

*The Blessing of Chalk is a traditional custom, reminding us that Christ is incarnate in the love we offer to one another in our daily lives. As the Magi came in search of the light of Christ and were welcomed by the Holy Family into the house, we welcome all who come in the Lord’s name, praying that our homes may be protected from darkness and be filled with the light of Christ and the warmth of his Spirit. This rite uses the traditional names ascribed to the Magi: Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar*

*The blessing of chalk may take place after the gospel at the Eucharist or before the final blessing. The chalk may be placed near the crib so that the people may take a piece home with them at the end of the Eucharist.*

***Introduction***

My dear friends, today we celebrate the Light of Christ revealed to the whole world through the Magi's visit to the house in Bethlehem. Let us pray that Christ who has come to make his home among us may guard our hearts and homes and fill us with the warmth of his love, so that all who visit our homes may be blessed with his life and love.

Lord God,

by the light of a star you guided the nations

to the radiant light of Christ.

Bless all who use this chalk to inscribe the initials of the wise men

(Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar) on the doors of their homes.

May they welcome all who come in the Lord’s name

and offer warmth and hospitality, light and joy.

Protect their homes from the darkness of sin

and fill their lives with the light of Christ

so that, aglow with the Spirit,

they will share the treasure of knowing Christ Jesus our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God forever and ever. **Amen.**

The Marking of Houses

with Blessed Chalk at Epiphany

*The lintel of the main door of the house (and any other door if you wish) is marked by a member of the household in the following way:*

*20 + C + M + B + (year)*

The three Wise Men

C Caspar

M Melchior

B and Balthasar

followed the star

which led them to Christ.

20 Two thousand

... and … years ago.

++ May Christ bless our home

++ and remain with us through the new year.

*The following prayer may then be used:*

God our Father,

bless us as we gather here

at the doorway of our home.

Protect us from darkness

and fill us with the grace of Christ

who calls us to welcome

all who come in his name.

We ask this through Jesus the Lord. **Amen.**

*The letters CMB also abbreviate the Latin phrase Christus mansionem benedicat, "May Christ bless the dwelling."*

An Epiphany Proclamation

*Whilst dates such as Christmas Day are immovable and fixed in our minds, the moveable feasts of the church, primarily Easter and all the other days that depend upon it, are not so familiarly known or easily worked out. Of course, these days, calendars publish these dates well in advance but during the time when calendars were not available the Epiphany proclamation was invaluable. However, even today, the proclamation has great value: it asserts the primary feast of Easter as the heart of the liturgical year and proclaims the resurrection of Christ and the paschal mystery which colours all the times and seasons of the year. The proclamation is also a good opportunity to distribute parish calendars.*

*The proclamation is made after the gospel or homily or after Communion, before the blessing and dismissal. It may be said or sung by a priest, deacon, reader or cantor.*

Dear brothers and sisters,

the Lord's glory has shone upon us

and will forever be manifest in our midst

until the day of his return.

Day by day and week by week,

through the rhythm of times and seasons,

let us celebrate the mystery of our salvation,

culminating in the Holy Triduum of Christ's death, burial and glorious resurrection

celebrated between the evening of the ….. of April and the evening of the …. April.

Easter is the church's celebration of Christ's saving work and his triumph over sin and death, and each Sunday we gather as an Easter People on the Day of the Lord's Resurrection. From Easter are determined the dates of all the days we keep as holy:

Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent, will occur on the ...

The Ascension of the Lord will be celebrated on the ...

Pentecost, the joyful conclusion of the Easter Season, will be celebrated on ...

The First Sunday of Advent will be celebrated on ...

Through all the feasts of the Church we, the Pilgrim people of God, proclaim the passover of Christ.

To Jesus Christ, who was and is and is to come, the Lord of time and history,

be glory and praise for ever and ever. **Amen.**

***Blessing of Calendars***

Eternal God,

day by day and week by week you assure us of your presence.

Through the life of your church and in the circumstances of our life

you lead us deeper into the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection.

Bless us and all who receive these calendars.

Go before us as a burning pillar of fire

and lead us with the cloud of your presence

that each day we may know your goodness

and grow closer to you.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Baptism of Christ

#### Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water

*Today we celebrate the Baptism of Christ by John the Baptist in the waters of the River Jordan. Our eyes are, once again, turned to the beloved Son of the Father, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The rite of sprinkling reminds us of our baptismal calling to turn away from sin and, through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, to live the risen life of Christ. This rite of Sprinkling may be used to replace the usual penitential rite.*

## Introduction

## Year A

My brothers and sisters: through Jesus, the good news of peace has been brought to all people. God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, fulfilling the will of the Father and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil. Anyone who honours God and does what is right is acceptable to him.

We will use this water to remind us of the life to which we have been called, by turning away from sin and embracing the good news of peace brought by Jesus, so that filled with the Holy Spirit and with power from on high we may faithfully bring the justice of God to a world awaiting his love.

*Year B*

My brothers and sisters: let us place our trust in the Beloved of the Father, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we are made children of God.

Let us use this water to remind us of the day we were first drawn to the waters of baptism, and to keep our eyes fixed on the way of life to which we have been called. Let us abandon sin and turn to God who is rich in forgiving and fills us with good things.

*Year C*

My brothers and sisters: the kindness and goodness of God is revealed in Christ who has saved us through the cleansing waters of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has poured over us.

We will use this water to remind us of our baptismal calling, by turning from sin and being washed in the overflowing compassion of Christ, the Beloved Son of the Father.

*General Introduction*

Dear friends,

we will use this water to remind us of our baptism.

Let us ask God to bless it

and to keep us faithful to the Spirit he has given us,

so that we may continue to walk in the light

and keep the flame of faith alive in our hearts.

*Silent Prayer*

God our Father,

your Son our Lord Jesus Christ was baptised

in the waters of the River Jordan by John,

and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

We ask you to bless this water which we use in faith.

Pour out your forgiveness upon us

and strengthen us in holiness.

Give us living water

always springing up as a fountain of salvation,

that Christ your Beloved Son may lead us to your presence in purity of heart.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*An appropriate song may be sung while the priest and people are sprinkled.*

*The following prayer is said after sprinkling:*

May almighty God, forgive us our sins

strengthen us in goodness

and keep us in eternal life

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*The Eucharist continues with the Gloria*

# The Presentation of Christ

# Blessing of Candles and Procession

# *The Presentation of Christ (also known as Candlemas) celebrates the close of the Christmas Festival of Light. It is a traditional custom that, at the beginning of the Eucharist, candles are blessed and carried in procession to welcome Christ. We celebrate the moment when Mary and Joseph, fulfilling the Law of Moses, presented Jesus in the temple. There Simeon welcomed and embraced the child Jesus, the Light of the Gentiles and the glory of his people. Three alternative introductions are offered here, drawing out the various themes of the feast.*

**First Form: Procession**

The people gather in a chapel or other suitable place outside the church where the Eucharist will be celebrated. They carry unlighted candles. While the candles are being lit, an appropriate hymn or song may be sung.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace and peace be with you.

**And keep you in the love of Christ.**

## I. Singing his praises

## The priest greets the people in these or similar words:

At Christmas we heard the angels' message proclaiming ‘Peace to all on earth.' Forty days later, as we recall the sacred moment when Christ was presented in the temple, we hear the voice of Simeon singing the praises of Jesus, the salvation promised to all the nations.

On this day, in the temple, the pain of love and the cost of salvation is declared, and God is praised for all he has done to lead his people from darkness into his own wonderful light.

As our Christmas celebrations come to a close we cling to the light of the Christ child. Led by the Spirit, let us go to the house of God, embracing the Light that has come into the world, and singing his praises. There we will recognise him in the breaking of bread, proclaiming his death and resurrection until he comes again.

Let us pray.

We praise and bless you Father,

for you have enlightened the world with the gift of your Son

who, sharing in our humanity, has come to set us free.

May we, who carry these candles,

walk in the joy of his presence

and, singing his praises,

proclaim him the King of glory.

We ask this through the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to meet the Lord.

## II. Cradling the Light

*The priest greets the people in these or similar words:*

Forty days ago we rejoiced in the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, cradled in the arms of his loving mother. Today, filled with the light of his presence, we recall the joyful day when he was presented in the temple, fulfilling the Law of Moses and going up to meet his faithful people.

Led by the Spirit, Simeon and Anna came to the temple and recognised Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Cradling Christ in his arms Simeon praised God and filled Mary and Joseph with awe and wonder at the things he said about their child. Anna, too, just at that moment, began to praise God and spoke of the child to all who looked forward with hope.

Let us, then, go up to the house of God, to see the salvation prepared for all the world. As we cradle these lights in our hands, let us embrace the Light of all nations in our hearts and lives. Soon, in the breaking of bread, we shall recognise Christ and there, at his table, proclaim his death and resurrection until he comes in glory.

Let us pray.

God our Father,

from age to age and in every generation

you have guided your people from darkness to light.

Now, in Christ, the brilliance of your light

shines out for all the world to see.

As we carry these candles

deliver us from the dominion of darkness

to go up to meet the Lord,

who comes in humility to set his people free.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to meet the Lord.

## III. Walk as Children of the Light

Forty days have passed since we celebrated the feast of Christ’s birth, announced by angels, greeted by shepherds and revealed to the Magi. Now, joyful in the light of his coming into the world, we recall the day when he was presented by Mary and Joseph in the temple.

There, in the temple, the old man Simeon embraced the child of Mary, sang his praises, and declared the cost of love and the joy of salvation. Anna, too, praised God and spoke of the child to all whose lingering lives had longed for freedom.

Filled with the joy of Christ’s birth and embracing the salvation he has won for us through his cross and resurrection, let us walk as children of the Light, confident in the glorious brightness of Christ the Lord. Flinging wide the ancient doors, let us go to the house of God and there embrace his eternal youth. May we be strengthened to walk in the way of the cross and come, at last, to the glory of the Resurrection.

Let us pray.

God our Father, source of all light,

today you revealed to Simeon

the light of revelation to the nations.

May we who carry these candles,

walk as children of the light

with the flame of faith alive in our hearts,

so that when the Lord comes

we may be ready to greet him.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to meet the Lord.

*During the procession, the Canticle of Simeon, or another hymn, is sung.*

*The Eucharist continues with the Gloria*

##### Second Form: Solemn Entrance

*The people, carrying unlighted candles, assemble in the church. The celebrant, with a representative group of the people, goes to a suitable place where most of the congregation can easily participate. While the candles are being lighted, the following or a similar Antiphon is sung:*

Christ is the light of the nations

and the glory of Israel his people

*After the greeting and introduction the celebrant blesses the candles, as above, then goes in procession to the altar, while all are singing.*

***Third Form***

*This option places the procession at the end of the Eucharist after the Prayer after Communion. It is also suitable for use before the sharing of the Peace.*

*The candles are lit (including the Paschal Candle) and the following antiphons are said or sung:*

Christ the Eternal Word

**Destined for the falling and rising of many**

Reveal the secret longings of our hearts

**And pierce us with the sword of your love.**

*A hymn may be sung*

*When all the candles are lit, the president says:*

Let us pray.

We praise and bless you Father,

for you have enlightened the world with the gift of your Son

who, sharing in our humanity, has come to set us free.

May we, who carry these candles,

walk in the joy of his presence

and, singing his praises,

proclaim him the King of glory.

We ask this through the same Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We wait for your loving kindness, God

**In the midst of your temple.**

*(Silence)*

*The president says:*

Lord God, springing source of everlasting light,

pour into the hearts of your faithful people

the brilliance of your eternal splendour,

that we, who bear these kindling flames

may light up this temple to your glory;

and with the darkness of our souls dispelled

may be counted to stand worthy before you in that eternal temple,

where you live and reign,

Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The ministers and people go in procession to the font, singing or saying the Nunc Dimittis.

*Either*

***R*** **A light to reveal you to the nations:**

**and to give glory to your people Israel.**

Lord, now you have set your servant free:

to go in peace as you have promised. ***R.***

For these eyes of mine have seen your salvation:

which you have prepared for all the world to see. ***R.***

Glory to the Father and to the Son,

And to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning, is now and shall be for ever. Amen. ***R.***

*Or*

*The Nunc Dimittis from Daily Prayer or another suitable version.*

***Final Responsory***

Father, today we bring to an end our celebration

of the Saviour’s birth.

**Help us, in whom he has been born,**

**To live his life that has no end.**

Today, we offer the Church’s sacrifice of praise

**Help us, who receive the bread of life,**

**To be thankful for your gift.**

Today, we rejoice with faithful Simeon and Anna.

**Help us, who will find the Lord in his eternal temple**

**To trust in your unfailing promises.**

Today, we greet the Light of the world.

**Help us, as we extinguish these candles,**

**never to forsake the light of Christ.**

*All now extinguish their candles. The Paschal candle remains lit.*

Today, we stand near the place of baptism

**Help us, marked with the cross,**

**to share the Lord’s death and resurrection.**

Today, we turn from Christ’s birth to his passion.

**Help us, for whom Lent is near,**

**to enter deeply into the Easter mystery.**

Today, we bless one another in your name

**Help us to walk in your light**

**all the days of our life**

**and shine as alight in the world**

**to your glory, our God and Father. Amen.**

*The ministers and people depart or if the procession has taken place before the sharing of the peace, the peace is now shared.*