

We usually do not publish the sermons for Family Eucharists as these are mostly a series of questions we ask in order to engage the children and get their responses. However this year we will be focusing on the close links between Church and Home and this sermon gives context.

4<sup>th</sup> January 2026

Mother Emma

(Children's responses in blue)

Today we are celebrating Epiphany, and at the start of our service, we remembered who arrived at the stable at Epiphany to worship the baby Jesus.

- Why did they come to the stable? [Following the Star](#)
- What did they bring with them as presents? [Gold, Frankincense and myrrh](#)

The Wise Men travelled a very long way to visit Jesus

Mary and Joseph must have thought it was pretty strange to have these very important, grand and clever people from another country, with camels and presents and probably page-boys, as we had in our procession, coming to visit them in their stable, but it seems that Mary invited them in to see her baby and made them welcome.

- Did any of you have visitors over Christmas?
- Did they stay in your house, or just come for the day?
- Did they bring you presents?
- Did you share food together?
- How do you think they felt after coming and spending time in your home?  
[Happy, grateful, joyful, sad to leave](#)
- Whose house are we in now? [God's House/ Jesus' House](#)
- How do you feel when you come to church especially at Christmas or now at Epiphany? [Happy, excited, loved, very tiny in a big space!](#)
- Safe?
- Welcome?
- Loved by God?
- Blessed?

Now some of the things we do when we come to church are a bit different from the things we do when we visit people's homes, but very often they give us the same feeling.

- God wants us to feel at home and welcome in his House,
- and he wants to share food with us
- and to talk with us
- and for us to leave feeling happy and peaceful and thankful,
- just as we do with visitors at home.

Home and church shouldn't feel completely different –

- we can see friends and talk and share food at church
- and we can pray and read the Bible and welcome people with love and hospitality at home.
- God and his Blessing are everywhere.

One way to make your home feel more like God's home is to write a blessing over the door. God tells the people of Israel to do this in the Old Testament, and there is an old tradition for saying a prayer for your house, for the people who live in it, and the people who visit it, which can be done at Epiphany.

At the end of the service, Fr Tim is going to bless these pieces of chalk.

- We shall be giving these out to people to take home,
- together with instructions on what to write over your door
- and a prayer to say for your house.

The Bible doesn't tell us the names of the Three Wise Men, but people over the centuries have given them names: Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar. So we shall be writing over our door the numbers of the year beginning – 2026 - and the letters CMB with crosses in between. These are very clever because they stand both for Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, but in Latin, they are the first letters of "Christus Mansionem Benedicat" which means "May Christ bless this home."

- Every time you go in or out of your house
- and you see these letters and numbers above the door,
- you can remember that God is with us everywhere;
- he keeps us safe
- and he teaches us to welcome others in his name.

Amen