

# HCA Epiphany Prayer Service

## WELCOME/LEADER:

When writer Robert Louis Stevenson was a little boy, he lived in a house on a hillside in Scotland. Every evening he would watch the lamplighter walk through the streets in the valley below, lighting each of the village street lights. “Look, Mother,” he would say. “Here comes the man who punches holes in the darkness.” Epiphany celebrates the time when God punched a hole in the darkness. The story tells us that Magi in the East saw a sign of God – a bright star – and left everything to follow the star. The Gospel tells us that this star “filled their hearts with delight” and that they delivered their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the Newborn King.

## READER 1: MATTHEW 2:11

**Leader:** As we celebrate the Epiphany, we are reminded that we are missionaries through our prayers and sacrifices and through our financial gifts to the Holy Childhood Association. We help to bring the light of Christ through our efforts to be “children helping children” in the Church around the world. Like the Magi, we offer special gifts to our Savior.

**Song:** We Three Kings

(Representatives come forward from the back of the church and process to the manager scene on the altar to present the offerings. Use decorative containers to represent each of the three gifts of the Magi.)

## READER 2:

**Frankincense** recalls how Jesus lived His life as one with the Father, always seeking to do God’s will. Our prayers rise like sweet-smelling incense before God. The thankfulness of our hearts and the holiness of our lives make us like frankincense to God and to the world. At this time, we bring up all the prayer offerings we made during Advent for the Missions.

## READER 3:

**Gold** is a precious metal, considered worthy of a king. It was used to barter and make purchases. As we prepared for Jesus’ birth, we put aside money from little jobs we had performed or from sacrifices made by not eating a piece of candy. At this time, we bring up our HCA mission money to make a difference in the lives of children.

## READER 4:

**Myrrh** is part of the compound in anointing oil. It has been used as medicine, a preservative and perfume. Frequently it is associated with death. In preparation for Christmas we were encouraged to give of ourselves, to volunteer and to offer service hours expecting nothing in return. We had to die to self to help others. Let us bring these sacrifices to the Infant King.

(Here particular students can be highlighted to say a few words about their personal efforts. For example: I watched my baby brother without asking my mom for money; I went to Mass every Tuesday during Advent; I gave my candy money to the Missions, etc. This can be followed with an announcement of the total money collected for the Missions during Advent.)

**Leader:** Thank you girls and boys for this Epiphany, making your love visible with the frankincense, gold and myrrh of your life. Continue to be missionaries and let your light shine everywhere. Continue to punch holes in the darkness of our world, even to the ends of the earth, letting the Light of our Lord shine through our words and actions. Now let us join together as one family in faith and pray **Our Father...**

## Closing Song: Joy to the World

*Epiphany Prayer Service courtesy of Sister Judy Gomila, MSC, Mission Education Coordinator in the Archdiocese of New Orleans.*

