

Virgin is represented as holding the Infant CHRIST and the three kings offering gifts, one of whom is very frequently represented as a Moor, and over the head of the "Young Child" appears the Star of Bethlehem, which is also itself a favourite ornament in mediæval embroidery.

CONCERNING THE EPIPHANY OR MANIFESTATION OF OUR LORD.

On the twelfth day after the Nativity, the Child JESUS manifested Himself to the Gentiles; that is, to the Magi, or "Wise Men," who were Gentiles. Be present, then, on this memorable day; for you will hardly find any other Festival so solemnly kept by the Church, with so great a variety of Antiphons, Responsories, and Lessons, and whatever else contributes to the celebration of a Festival. Not that it is really greater than other Festivals, but only that on this day things, many and great, were done by the Lord JESUS, and mostly concerning the Church itself.

First, on this day the Church, which is gathered from the Gentiles, was received by Christ, for it was represented by the "Wise Men." On His Birthday CHRIST manifested Himself to the Jews in the person of the Shepherds; the Jews, who, with a few exceptions, did not receive the Word of GOD. To-day, indeed, He manifested Himself to the Gentiles who now form the Church of GOD'S chosen people. Therefore, this is probably the Festival of the Church herself and of faithful Christians.

Secondly, on this day, nine-and-twenty years after His Birth, the Church was espoused by and united to Him through His Baptism. And, therefore, on this day is joyfully sung, "This day is the Church joined to her Heavenly Spouse." For in our baptism our souls are espoused to Christ, who stored up grace for us in His Baptism, and the congregation of the faithful is called the Church.

Thirdly, on this day, a year after His Baptism, He wrought His first miracle at the wedding feast, which may be also taken as an image of the union between Himself and His Church. It may have been also on this day that He multiplied the loaves and fishes. But the three first of these events the Church commemorates on this day, and not the last. See, then, how worthy of veneration this day is, upon which the LORD chose to work such great wonders. The Church, therefore, in consideration of the many blessings shown to her by her spouse to-day,