HISTORY AND MEANING
Epiphany, also known as Three Kings Day and El Día de los Tres Reyes, is celebrated 12 days after Christmas, when the wise men (or three kings) visited baby Jesus and gave the gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The word *epiphany* means “revelation,” and the day celebrates the revelation of the birth of Jesus. For some, Epiphany also commemorates the baptism of Jesus. It is mainly celebrated by Catholics and Orthodox Christians. There are many traditional celebrations, which vary slightly from culture to culture.

TYPICAL OBSERVANCES
• Epiphany is observed by blessing the home, blessing water, exchanging gifts, performing plays and feasting (which notably includes a “king cake”). In Spain, there is a large festival and parade known as *Fiesta de Los Tres Reyes Mages*, or the Festival of the Three Magic Kings. The king cake is called *roscon*, meaning “ring-shaped roll,” and it is filled with cream or chocolate and topped with a paper crown. In France, devotees eat *galette des rois*, a flat almond cake that has a toy crown cooked inside. In Mexico, the king cake is called *rosca de reyes* and has a figure of baby Jesus inside the cake.
• Families celebrate by leaving out hay and water for the three kings’ camels. On this day, children wait for their presents, which are delivered by the three kings.
• Celebrations include parades and performances.

TIPS FOR SUPPORTING THE VANDERBILT COMMUNITY
• Communication is key. Ask how you can support observances.
• Students are not automatically excused from class for this holiday. Graduate and professional students must refer to their own school and departmental vacation policies and calendar for more specific information.
• Staff members may request paid time off to celebrate. Support their preference to take leave for their religious observance.

RESOURCES FOR MANAGING WELL-BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH
People feel many types of emotions during the holidays—joy, peace, stress and depression, to name a few. Whatever you feel, know you are not alone, and Vanderbilt has resources to help you through these challenges.

**Faculty, Staff and Postdocs**
Work/Life Connections—EAP
(615) 936-1327
vumc.org/health-wellness/work-life

**Students**
Office of Student Care Coordination
(615) 343-9355
vanderbilt.edu/carecoordination

This resource is part of a toolkit created by Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to highlight religious and cultural observances that members of our community may practice. This toolkit is not meant to be exhaustive, but instead to provide a general overview of how we can support staff, faculty and students. We continually refine this information and welcome your suggestions.

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