

Embracing Tradition: Three Kings Day is a Celebration of Generosity and Family

New Year's Day marks the end of the holiday season for most people, but not for those celebrating Three Kings' Day, or Dia de Los Reyes, as it is known in Spanish-speaking countries. Observed on January 6, the Christian feast day commemorates the day when the three wise men — Melchior, Caspar, and Balthazar — arrived in Bethlehem bearing gifts for the newborn Jesus.

When people celebrate Three Kings Day, they are commemorating the biblical story of the magis' journey to honor the infant Jesus. The gifts they presented — gold, frankincense, and myrrh — symbolize wealth, divinity, and mortality. Many modern celebrations reflect the religious origins of the holiday but also the spirit of giving and generosity.

Three Kings Day is marked by a variety of traditions that differ across regions and communities. In many regions, parades are held on January 5, reenacting the journey of the magi. Individuals dressed as the three kings traverse the streets, often distributing sweets and trinkets to onlookers. That night, children leave out their shoes, so the wise men can fill them with gifts and treats.

On January 6, families gather for a festive meal which traditionally includes the Rosca de Reyes, a sweet bread shaped like a wreath. The treat is studded with nuts and candied fruit, which represent jewels in the kings' crown, and baked inside is a tiny surprise – a figurine representing the baby Jesus. Whoever finds the tiny doll is responsible for hosting a celebration on Candlemas, observed on February 2.

While Three Kings Day has deep roots in Catholic traditions, it is not limited to a single religious or cultural group. The celebration is widely observed in Hispanic and Latine cultures, where it holds special cultural and familial significance. However, it is not exclusive to these communities, and people of various backgrounds may participate in the festivities, which include [parades](#), [festivals](#), music, and gatherings with family and friends.

As you explore the diverse winter celebrations of our global community, Three Kings Day is an opportunity to express generosity and the joy of giving. In the workplace, organizing a charitable initiative would align with the holiday's spirit of giving and generosity. Coworkers could collect food, clothing, and other essential items for a local nonprofit or raise money for a community organization.

January 6 marks the end of the Twelve Days of Christmas, and it is also known as Little Christmas, Old Christmas, Green Christmas, or Twelfth Night in various cultures. The day is also celebrated by some Christians as the Feast of the Epiphany, commemorating the baptism of Jesus. The holiday aims to bring people together in a spirit of unity, a goal that aligns with businesses that value diversity, equity, and belonging.