

**Feast
Of
Trumpets
Q & A**

Why is Epiphany on Jan. 6?

Before the Roman or Gregorian calendar, the Egyptians celebrated the winter solstice (which then occurred on January 6) with a tribute to Aeon, the Virgin.

How can Christmas Eve and Christ celebrate the same event?

The Hebrew “day” started at 6:00 at night and ended at 5:59 pm the next night.

When is Easter celebrated?

Easter is the first Sunday after the first full moon on/after March 21.

Readings:

God commanded the fall feasts.

Read Leviticus 23:23-44, pages 128-129.

What the wise men told Herod about Jesus.

Read Matthew 2:1-6 based on Micah 5.

What was the Roman Calendar?

The Roman calendar was a very complicated lunar calendar, based on the moon phases. It required a group of people to decide when days should be added or removed in order to keep the calendar in sync. New Year's began on March 1.

In order to create a more standardized calendar, in 46 B.C., Julius Caesar created a solar calendar based entirely on Earth's revolutions around the Sun, also called a tropical year. The first Julian calendar began January 1, 45 B.C.

In the 12th century, New Year's Day was changed to March 25, to correspond to the Annunciation, when Mary was told that she would bear Jesus Christ. (9 months later is how the date for Christmas was established.)

In the Julian calendar, a common year has 365

days divided into 12 months—with a leap day, every 4 years, added to the month of February.

Sounds familiar, right? The problem is that the Julian calendar was based on a 365.25 day year (it is actually a little shorter—365.2425 days) and so gains a day every 129 years. In other words, the Julian calendar gains 3.1 days every 400 years.

The Gregorian calendar was proclaimed in 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII as a reform of the Julian calendar. The Gregorian calendar is accurate to within one day in 20,000 years and differs from the Julian only in that no century year is a leap year unless it is exactly divisible by 400 (e.g., 1600 and 2000). A further proposed refinement, the designation of years evenly divisible by 4,000 as common (not leap) years.

Because of their relationship with the pope, it wasn't until 1752 that the U.S. and England made the switch from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar. The year 1751 began on March 25 (Julian calendar) and ended on December 31, 282 days long. 1752 began on January 1, under the new Gregorian calendar. To get the calendar back in sync, a number of days had to be dropped in 1752. September 2, 1752 was followed by September 14, 1752.

Ben Franklin said, "Be not astonished, nor look with scorn, dear reader, at such a deduction of days, nor regret as for the loss of so much time, but take this for your consolation, that your expenses will appear lighter and your mind be more at ease. And what an indulgence is here, for those who love their pillow to lie down in Peace on the second of this month and not perhaps awake till the morning of the fourteenth."

Why do churches celebrate Epiphany?

The earliest reference to Epiphany as a Christian Feast is by Ammianus Marcellinus, Roman soldier and historian born in 330 A.D., who assigns January 6 to both Jesus' birth and baptism.

Epiphany is also known as Twelfth Day or Old Christmas. Since the exact date of Jesus' birth is not known, the early Christian church had to pick a day to celebrate. The Eastern church chose January 6.

The Roman Catholic Church chose December 25 in 336 A.D., when the first Christian Roman Emperor, Constantine, was in charge. "The real reason for the selection of Dec. 25 seems to have been that it is exactly nine months after March 25, the traditional date of Jesus' crucifixion. ... As Christians developed the theological idea that Jesus was conceived and crucified on the same date, they set the date of his birth nine months later."

In the 300s both churches adopted each other's festival. This created the 12-day celebration from Christmas to Epiphany. This time is known as the Twelve Days of Christmas.

Paul tells us we have liberty to observe days or not observe days, as long as we do it to the Lord. Jesus Christ, as well as Paul, warned about following what man commands, instead of God.

Matthew 15:9

But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Mark 7:7

Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Titus 1:14

Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

Colossians 2:22

Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?