The Epiphany in the streets of Prague

On Sunday, the 6th of January 2019, the Epiphany, you will have the opportunity to witness a special procession of the Three Wise Men (the Three Kings) on camels in the streets of the Czech Capital. The parade will proceed from Malostranské náměstí via Karlův most (Charles Bridge) to the Staroměstské náměstí (Old Town Square), where the Jakub Jan Ryba's 'Czech Christmas Mass' (Česká mše vánoční) will be played and sung, concluding the procession and the Christmas season.

According to the Christian tradition, a great bright star appeared in the sky in the east to the Three Wise Men (the Three Kings) to lead them on their journey to the new-born child, Jesus Christ. They were bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The procession, reminding us of this Biblical event, is organised annually by the Archdiocese Charity Prague. By re-enacting the legend, the Charity wants to express their grateful thanks to the contributors to their collection that assists those in need.

The service in the church of St. Tomas (kostel sv. Tomáše)

In the Czech tradition, on the Epiphany, koledníci, mostly children dressed up as kings, walk door to door, collecting money for the poor and leaving the inscription K † M † B † followed by the current year with a blessed chalk over the doorways. This variant of the letters C † M † B † is the abbreviation of the Latin "Christus mansion benedicat", i.e., "Christ bless this house". Before the departure of the procession from Arcibiskupský palác (the Archbishop's Palace), the Archbishop of Prague Cardinal Dominik Duka will give his blessing to the volunteers, koledníkům, of Tříkrálová sbírka (the Three Wise Men Collection). You may meet one or more of these groups of koledníci, who will wish you a Happy New Year and ask for a contribution, carrying an official collection box. The proceeds of the collection will support charity projects, for example: material and food aid to the poorest people in the Czech Republic, Poradna Magdala that provides counselling and assistance to victims of violence, building a parish community centre of Farní charita Vlašim, the rehabilitation of Belarusian children in Prague, and donations towards the costs of a hospital in Uganda.

The procession and the 'Czech Christmas Mass'

The Wise Men Kašpar, Melichar and Baltazar, along with drummers, trumpeters and other escorts, start their 'journey to Bethlehem' from Arcibiskupský palác, and they continue on their way via Mostecká ulice, Karlův most, Karlova ulice, Seminářská ulice, Mariánské náměstí, Linhartská ulice, ulice U Radnice, Malé náměstí, to their final destination, Staroměstské náměstí.

On the stage in Staroměstské náměstí (Old Town Square), the Three Wise Men will worship the baby Jesus and give him their gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh. Then the Wise Man Kašpar will read a message from the Three Wise Men to the children, the people of Prague and the entire country. Finally, the Three Wise Men with the Holy Family and the baby Jesus will greet all present. However, the program in the square does not end there. From 4pm, Česká mše vánoční ('Czech Christmas Mass') by Jakub Jan Ryba will be played and sung.

Gifts not only for the baby Jesus

Just as the Three Wise Men brought gifts to the baby Jesus, you can bring gifts to children from socially disadvantaged families and care homes. A basket will be placed near the stage where people can donate children's books, toys, games and school necessities.

www.praha.charita.cz

The schedule of the Three Wise Men's Procession

2:30pm - the Mass and the blessing by the Cardinal to koledníci Tříkrálové sbírky (the volunteers of The Three Wise Men Collection) in The Church of St. Tomáš in Prague 1

3pm - The beginning of the procession of the Three Wise Men on camels from Josefská ulice to Staroměstské náměstí, via Karlův most (Charles Bridge), Karlova ulice and Malé náměstí
4pm - Jakub Jan Ryba: ‘Czech Christmas Mass’ (Česká mše vánoční)

INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT

06/01 at 2:30pm

Route:

Kostel sv. Tomáše in Malá Strana - Karlův most - Staroměstské náměstí

(from the Church of St. Thomas in Lesser Town via Charles Bridge to Old Town Square)