

Then offer the following prayer:

Visit, O blessed Lord, this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live or visit here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may manifest your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and forever. Amen.

“Chalking the door” is a way to celebrate and literally mark the occasion of the Epiphany and God’s blessing of our lives and home. With time the chalk will fade. As it does we let the meaning of the symbols written sink into the depths of our heart and be manifest in our words and actions the Latin words, *Christus mansionem benedicat* -

**“May Christ bless this house.”**



## Feast of the Epiphany 2020

*Blessing of the Family Home,  
using blessed chalk, recalling the  
Visit of the Magi to the  
Holy Family's Home.*



This is a Catholic custom that seems to have originated in, and spread from, Central Europe at the end of the Middle Ages.

It is traditional for parish priests to bless chalk for each family so that they may mark the names of the three Magi over their doors in the blessing of homes as a witness of their faith and a protection against evil.

The chalk is a reminder of the dust of the earth from which man was made. See *Genesis 3:19*. "Remember, man, thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return." Any colour of chalk can be used.

We invite you to adopt this custom in your family.

### **Blessing the Chalk**

**V.** Our help is in the name of the Lord.

**R. Who made heaven and earth.**

**V.** The Lord be with you.

**R. And with your spirit.**

**V.** The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in:

**R. From this time forth for evermore.**

Let us pray.

Bless, + O Lord God, this creature, chalk, and let it be a help to mankind. Grant that those who will use it with faith in your most holy name, and with it inscribe on the doors of their homes the names of your saints, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, may through their merits and

intercession enjoy health in body and protection of soul; through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

*The chalk is sprinkled with holy water.*

### **Instructions for Blessing the Home**

The family gathers to ask God's blessing on their home and on those who live in or visit the home.

It is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest in our home, our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows.

A traditional way of doing this is to use chalk to write above the home's entrance, 20 ☉ C + M + B ☩ 20.

The letters C, M, B have two meanings.

They are the initials of the traditional names of the three magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar.

They also abbreviate the Latin words "Christus Mansionem Benedicat" - "May Christ bless this house."

The "☉" sign represents the Star that guided the Magi.

The "☩" sign represents the cross; and 2020 is the year.

Using the blessed chalk mark the lintel of your front door (or the brickwork just above or to the side) as follows:

**20 ☉ C + M + B ☩ 20** while saying:

The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar followed the Star of God's Son who became human about two thousand and twenty years ago. May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout the new year. Amen.