

2021 Epiphany Blessing

The Church has a custom of blessing homes on the Solemnity of the Epiphany and the week following. Family and friends gather to ask God's blessing on their homes and 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. Although we are not able to provide chalk and holy water for you to bless your home this year because of coronavirus safety precautions, we want to encourage you to find your chalk and holy water and to bless your home

"Chalking the door" is a way to celebrate 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

A traditional way of doing this is to use blessed chalk and write above the home's entryway, 20 + C + M + B + 21. The letters C, M, B, have two meanings. They are the initials of the three magi's traditional names: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. They also abbreviate the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless the house." The "+" signs represent the cross and 2021 in the year.

Blessing the Chalk

Leader: Our help is the name of the Lord:

Others: The maker of heaven and earth.

Leader: The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in:

Others: From this time forth, forever.

Leader: The Lord be with you.

Others: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray.

All: Loving God, bless this chalk which you have created, that it may be helpful to your people; and grant that through the invocation of your most Holy Name all who use it in faith to write upon the doors of their homes the names of your saints, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, may receive health of body and protection of soul for all who dwell in or visit their home; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Instructions for Blessing the Home

Using the blessed chalk, mark the lintel (top of the frame) of your front door (or front porch step) as follows:

20 + C + M + B + 21 while saying:

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

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 all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and forever. Amen.