

20 + C + M + B + 25



Chalk the House

EPIPHANY HOUSE BLESSING

JANUARY 5, 2025

THE FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY OF THE LORD

The numbers represent the New Year.

2 meanings for CMB

(Caspar) (Melchior) & (Balthasar) the traditional Magi names

& "Christus Mansionem Benedicat"

Latin for "May Christ Bless this House"

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The "+" signs represent the cross.

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2025 is the year of the blessing.



We recommend this custom to all families of the archdiocese. This Christian custom of course has an ancient biblical precedent, as the Israelites in the Old Testament marked their doors in order to be saved from death at the Passover.

CHALK

The chalk used to write the epiphany symbol is blessed by a priest on the feast of the epiphany and taken home to use to write the message on their threshold.

A simple prayerful ritual serves to protect Christian homes from evil spirits until the next feast of the epiphany, when the annual custom is renewed.

This also represents the hospitality of the Holy Family to the Magi as well as all gentiles, and thus serves as a house blessing through which God is invited into one's home. As each family gathers to ask God's blessing on their home, & on those who live in or who visit the home, it is an invitation to Jesus to be our daily guest, and to join in our work, our play, our meals, our joys and our sorrows.

THE BLESSING OF THE CHALK

L. Our help is in the name of the Lord;
R. Who made heaven and earth.
L. The Lord will watch over our going out & our coming home;
R. From this time forth & forevermore.

Let us pray:

Loving God, bless this chalk that it may be helpful to your people & grant through the invocation of your most holy name, that we who use it in faith to write upon the doors of our home, the names of your holy ones Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar, may receive health of body and protection of soul, for all who dwell in or visit our home. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

INSTRUCTION

Use the blessed chalk to mark your front door or the front porch step as follows:

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while reciting the names of the three wise men - Caspar Melchior & Balthazar, followed by tracing the star of David, & saying:

May Christ bless our home & remain with us throughout the new year. Amen.

Then pray as follows:

Visit dear Lord, this home with the grace of your presence. Bless all of us who live here or visit here, with the gift of your love, & grant that we may manifest your love to each other, & to all whose lives we touch.

May we grow in holiness & in knowledge & love of you. Guide, comfort & strengthen us in peace O Lord, now & forever. Amen.

With time the chalk fades away, but as it does, we let the meaning of the symbols sink into the depths of our heart and be manifest in our words & our actions.

Alternatively: *Instead of chalk, the family draws up a poster to stick at the entrance of their home, and sprinkle it with holy water obtained from the parish.*