

A House Blessing for Epiphany

On the Feast of Epiphany, we celebrate the time when the Three Wise Men (sometimes called Magi) visited Jesus, Mary, and Joseph and offered them gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Epiphany is twelve days after Christmas, but in the United States we celebrate it on the second Sunday after Christmas Day.

One way to celebrate this day is to celebrate the old Christian tradition of blessing your house with chalk. On the inside lintel of the front door, we write this inscription:

20 + C + M + B + 17

The letters have two meanings. The letters are the initials of the traditional names of the Three Wise Men: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. They also stand for the Latin words "*Christus Mansionem Benedicat*," which means "May Christ bless this house!"

The crosses remind us of Christ, whom we are asking to bless all who live in and visit the home. You can use the following blessing to write the inscription above your door, or somewhere on the top door frame.

20 + C + M + B + 17

Begin by gathering outside the front door.

Everyone prays an "Our Father" together. Then the leader says and writes:

"The Three Wise Men, Caspar..."

Write the letter C

"Melchior..."

Write the letter M

"and Balthazar..."

Write the letter B



**"followed the star of God's Son, Who became man,
Two Thousand..."**

Write the number 20

"and (number) years ago."

Write the last two digits of the year

"May Christ bless our home..."

Write the first two crosses

"and remain with us through the new year."

Write the last two crosses

Then everyone prays together:

Almighty God, incline your ear. Bless us and all who are gathered here. Make the door of my house wide enough to receive all who need human love and companionship, narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride and strife. Make its threshold smooth enough to be neither stumbling block to children nor to straying feet, but rugged and strong enough to turn back the tempter's power. O God, make the door of my house the gateway to Your eternal Kingdom. We ask these things in the Name of Jesus Christ Your Son. Amen.