

Blessing of the Home on the Feast of the Epiphany

In 2001 there was a document issued:

CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP
AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS

DIRECTORY
ON POPULAR PIETY AND THE LITURGY

PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

In n. 118 in the Directory it states the following:

- the blessing of homes, on whose lentils are inscribed the Cross of salvation, together with the indication of the year and the initials of the three wise men (C+M+B), which can also be interpreted to mean Christus mansionem benedicat, written in blessed chalk; this custom, often accompanied by processions of children accompanied by their parents, expresses the blessing of Christ through the intercession of the three wise men and is an occasion for gathering offerings for charitable and missionary purposes;

The C, M, B, often are interpreted as the first letter of the traditional wise men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Noted above it also can be taken to mean, ***Christ, this Mansion, He blesses*** (our home). This year we will bless Chalk on the feast of the Epiphany, (traditionally the 12th day of Christmas). In the United States the Bishop's have chosen to celebrate it the second Sunday after Christmas.

In times past there seemingly was a much stronger sense of Catholic Culture, it is being lost it seems. This is some small way in which we can try and recapture a sense of our rich traditions.

I fear that some people may even feel a little silly doing this, but I ask that you all participate in this blessing with your family. I cannot prove to you that faith is real, or my love for you is genuine, but to the best of my ability I try and sincerely relate the faith to the best of my own limited abilities. We will bless chalk and holy water to be used for the blessing of each of your homes. I hope no one in our parish misses this opportunity.

After Mass on the Epiphany, the day that celebrates the “manifestation” of Christ to all peoples, even beyond the Jews. The Jews will always be His chosen people. They are the people that were entrusted with bringing Christ our Savior, into the world.

Please take a piece of blessed chalk, and the small container of Holy Water and take a few minutes and say the following prayers in your home:

All make the sign of the cross, remembering our Baptism:
In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Head of Household: Our Help is in Name of the Lord
All Respond: *Who made Heaven and Earth!*

Head of Household:
All Powerful and ever living God, we ask that you bestow your blessing upon our Household. We recall on the Feast of Epiphany how wise leaders from distant lands recognized your coming into the world. May we be mindful of your presence and your power and love. May all who enter this home be blessed by your presence and may all who live here reflect your love to all who enter here.

As the youngest able person writes above the door lintel with the chalk the following is said:

Family member:

In every year we write the numerals which stand for the centuries since the Word became flesh. For example in the year 2016 we would write 2 and 0. Between each inscription we make the cross, which reminds us of the victory which Christ won for us through His suffering. We write the C which stands for Caspar, the traditional name of the king who some believe traveled from India, now we write another cross, then we make the letter M which stood for Melchior another wise man who some believe came from Persia, or modern day Iran, we write the cross again, next we make the letter B, which stands for Balthazar the magi who is believed by some to be from Arabia. We include another cross, Finally we write the current year, in the example, 16. A year that we hope we will all be drawn closer to Christ, the true and eternal King of the universe.

We also understand how the initials can cause us to recall how Christ truly blesses our home which is truly our own mansion. May we all look to the day when we will find ourselves in the heavenly mansion that Christ has prepared for all who believe, and strive to live and know the Wisdom that He longs to give us.

Head of Household: Let us all pray the prayer Jesus taught us:

Leader: Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy Kingdom, come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in Heaven,

Family responds: *Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil, Amen.*

Head of Household As Jesus showed respect for His mother, let us also ask her to pray for us:

Leader: *Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, and blessed are thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.*

Family responds: *Holy Mary mother of God, pray for us sinners, Now and at the hour of our death. Amen*

Head of Household: As we ask for God's blessing on our home in this Christmas season, may we remember all those who died this year. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace

Family Responds *May your perpetual light shine upon them!*

Head of Household: We ask all these things, through Christ our Lord.

Family Responds: *Amen!*

All make the Sign of the Cross, a sign that recalls our own baptism.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

Now family members can take turns sprinkling water in the various areas of the home.

On behalf of the Church I thank you for making the effort to strengthen your faith and make your family an instrument of the New Evangelization. The only hope for our world is Christ, may we do our part to bring Him to others. God bless you all and thanks again!