

WHAT IS AN EPIPHANY HOUSE BLESSING?

An Epiphany House Blessing is a blessing done at the doorway of a Christian home to ward off evil and witness to the faith.

HOW TO DO AN EPIPHANY HOUSE BLESSING STEP-BY-STEP:

1. Get chalk blessed by a priest.
2. Assemble at the front door.
3. Pray the blessing and chalk the door or lintel with the formula 20+C+M+B+26 or XX+C+M+B+XXVI.

WHAT IS BLESSED CHALK?

Blessed chalk is a sacramental of the Church. It is traditional to use white chalk to symbolize purity from evil, but any color of chalk can be blessed. The chalk serves as a reminder to us that we are dust as in Genesis 3:19, “Remember, man, that dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return.” The chalk should be blessed by a member of the clergy. Here is the form of blessing of the chalk :

Priest: Our help is in the name of The Lord.

All: Who hath made heaven and earth.

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And with thy spirit.

Priest: Let us pray: Bless, + O Lord God, this creature chalk to render it helpful to men. Grant that they who use it in faith and with it inscribe upon the entrance of their homes the names of thy saints, Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar and the invocation of thy blessing, may enjoy health of body and protection of soul. Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

WHY THE DOORWAY OR LINTEL?

The use of the doorway or lintel is reminiscent of the Israelites marking their doorways with the blood of the lamb on the first Passover in Egypt. It is also the entrance to the home which provides a strong witness to others and symbolizes a commitment to welcome Christ into the home all year long. In a very practical way, too, as we go in and out of our homes, we will be reminded of this commitment our family has made to Christ.

WHAT DO THE NUMBERS MEAN?

The first two numbers represent the first two digits of the current Year of our Lord. The final two

numbers also represent this.

WHAT DOES THE C+M+B MEAN?

The C+M+B has a dual meaning:

1. The first meaning is the names of the three kings, or three wise men. Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. They are not named in the Bible, but they are named in an ancient Greek text c AD 500 entitled *Excerpta Latina Barbari*.
2. Secondly, it stands for the Latin phrase "*Christus mansionem benedicat*" which means "May Christ Bless this Home."
3. The "+"s are the sign of the cross.

SHORT FORM FOR THE CHALKING OF THE DOOR

All: May all who come to our home this year rejoice to find Christ living amongst us; and may we seek and serve, in everyone we meet, that same Jesus who is thy Incarnate Word, now and forevermore. *Amen.*

All: O God of heaven and earth, who hast revealed thy only-begotten Son to all nations by the guiding of a star. Bless this house and all who dwell within. Fill us with the light of Christ, we beseech thee, that our care for others may reflect thy love; Through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

All: Almighty God, bless this household. May we be blessed with health, goodness of heart, gentleness, and be found ever abiding in thy will: Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

After the chalking in the form of 20+C+M+B+26 or XX+C+M+B+XXVI a hymn verse may be sung:

"Glorious now, behold Him arise,
King and God sacrifice!
Alleluia, Alleluia
Earth to Heav'n replies:
O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light."

Or

"Lo! star led chieftains, Magi, Christ adoring,
Offer Him incense, gold, and myrrh;
We to the Christ Child bring our hearts' oblations.
O come, let us adore Him, (3×)
Christ the Lord."

(Tune: O Come All Ye Faithful)

(Tune: We Three Kings)