

How to Bless Your Home with Epiphany Chalk

It's a powerful blessing that lasts the whole year

<https://aleteia.org/2018/01/05/how-to-bless-your-home-with-epiphany-chalk/>

BACKGROUND

Each year around the feast of the Epiphany St. Thomas More Catholic Church along with many parishes throughout the world participate in an annual blessing of the home with chalk. It is an ancient tradition that not only places God at the entrance of your home, it places your entire family under his protection.

The Epiphany blessing of homes is a centuries old tradition where priests would visit each home in their parish after the Feast of the Epiphany. Over time it became more difficult to accomplish this as parishes grew and priests were stretched thin. For this reason it became an accepted tradition that a member of the household would lead this blessing in place of the priest.

The blessing has biblical roots, deeply tied to the Passover in the book of Exodus.

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt ... “take some of the blood [of the lamb], and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat them. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it ... The blood shall be a sign for you, upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.” (cf. Exodus 12:1- 13)

The Epiphany blessing is traditionally written on the lintel of the main doorway and even some of the prayers echo God's words of protection that he gave to Moses. While the Epiphany blessing was not given in the same manner as it was to Moses, the Church provides it for our own spiritual benefit. The Church desires our salvation and so gives us beautiful sacramentals to assist us along the path to Eternal Life.

Traditionally a priest blesses chalk on the Feast of the Epiphany by saying the following prayer (from the Roman Ritual):

Bless, O Lord God, this creature, chalk, and let it be a help to mankind. Grant that those who will use it with faith in your most holy name, and with it inscribe on the doors of their homes the names of your saints, Casper, Melchior, and Balthazar, may through their merits and intercession enjoy health in body and protection of soul; through Christ our Lord.

The chalk is then distributed after Mass.

HOW TO BLESS YOUR HOME

1. **Get the blessed chalk**, either from a priest or parish steward.
2. **Have a member or head of household bless the home** in the following manner adapted from the Roman Ritual:

Head of Household *Peace be to this house.*

Family *And to all who dwell herein.*

Head of Household *From the east came the Magi to Bethlehem to adore the Lord; and opening their treasures they offered precious gifts: gold for the great King, incense for the true God, and myrrh in symbol of His burial.*

Family *My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.*

3. **The Head of Household sprinkles Holy water** on the doorpost of the front door.

Family	<i>He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. He has come to the help of his servant Israel for he remembered his promise of mercy, the promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children forever.</i>
ALL	<i>From the east came the Magi to Bethlehem to adore the Lord; and opening their treasures they offered precious gifts: gold for the great King, incense for the true God, and myrrh in symbol of His burial.</i>
Head of Household	<i>Our Father Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. 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...</i>
Family	<i>But deliver us from evil.</i>
Head of Household	<i>All from Saba shall come.</i>
ALL	<i>Bringing gold and frankincense.</i>
Head of Household	<i>O Lord, hear my prayer.</i>
ALL	<i>And let my cry come unto Thee.</i>
Head of Household	<i>Let us pray. O God, who by the guidance of a star didst on this day manifest Thine only-begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we who know Thee by faith may also attain the vision of Thy glorious majesty. Through Christ our Lord.</i>
ALL	<i>Amen.</i>
Head of Household	<i>Be enlightened, be enlightened, O Jerusalem, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee— Jesus Christ born of the Virgin Mary.</i>
ALL	<i>And the Gentiles shall walk in thy light and kings in the splendor of thy rising, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee.</i>
Head of Household	<i>Let us pray. Bless, O Lord God almighty, this home, that in it there may be health, purity, the strength of victory, humility, goodness and mercy, the fulfillment of Thy law, the thanksgiving to God the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. And may this blessing remain upon this home and upon all who dwell herein. Through Christ our Lord.</i>
ALL	<i>Amen.</i>

4. **Head of household takes the blessed chalk & writes** the initials of the three Wise Men, connected with Crosses, over the inside of your front door (on the lintel, if possible). Then write the year, breaking up the numbers and the year so that they fall on both sides of the initials with the "20" being the millennium and century, the "C" standing for the first Wise Man, Caspar, the "M" standing for Melchior, the "B" standing for Balthasar, and the "2x" standing for the decade and year, for example '23, '24, '25, etc.

20 C+M+B 2X

It is also popularly believed that the Kings' initials stand for "Christus mansionem benedicat" ("Christ bless this house").

This is a beautiful blessing that brings many graces upon those who practice it in faith and is an added protection against any spiritual enemies that may be lurking around.