

The Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord

Epiphany means “manifestation.” The first Epiphany was the visit of the Magi to adore the Christ Child. The Magi, who were actually scholars and scientists, came to be associated with kings. Their gifts reveal this holy Child’s identity; *gold* for Christ’s Kingship, *incense* for His divinity, and *myrrh* for His sacrifice on the Cross.

The Feast of Epiphany is traditionally celebrated as the *twelfth night of Christmas*, on January 6th. In the United States, this feast has been moved to the Sunday, January 3, 2021. In many families, the king figurines are moved a bit closer to the nativity scene every day from Christmas Day until Epiphany. Moreover, it is traditional for parish priests to bless water, chalk, and incense on the eve of Epiphany, and use them for the blessing of homes the next day.

The blessing of homes (schools, places of employment, etc.) on Epiphany revives the beautiful custom of making our homes sacramentals. Sacramentals make us more mindful, receptive and cooperative with God’s grace. This blessing also reminds us that Christ is the One Who enlightens our hearts and homes with His love. He is the source of our hope, our comfort and our joy.

Marking doorways with blessed chalk is also a witness of faith. Use the chalk to mark above the main door and, if possible, over all exterior doors in the following fashion:

- Numerals to consecrate the New Year.
- Initials to remind us of the legendary names of the Magi—Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar—and also to represent the Latin motto: ***Christus mansionem benedicat*** (May Christ bless this house)
- Four crosses to represent the four seasons.
- Example for the year **2021: 20 + C + M + B + 21**

Epiphany Blessing of the Home

If a priest is present, he leads; otherwise, the head of the family is the leader.

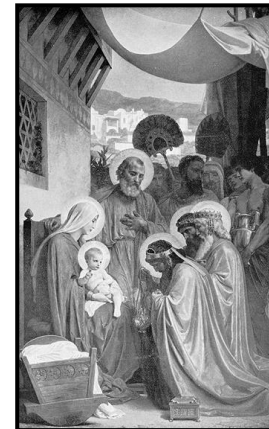
All present go from room to room, blessing each room with holy water and praying the following prayer:

Blessed be all the rooms of this home. May each of them be holy and filled with the spirit of *happiness and peace, love and affection*. May the spirit of *pardon and affection* reside with us and be always ready to heal our divisions. May the spirits of *joy and laughter, hope and faith, playfulness and prayer, compassion and love* be perpetual guests in our home. May God’s holy blessing rest upon us all, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

As the leader inscribes the initials of the three Magi above the exterior doorways using the blessed chalk, the following prayer is prayed:

Inscription for the year **2021: 20 + C + M + B + 21**

Blessed be this doorway. May all who come to our home this year rejoice to find Christ living among us as we welcome them with *respect and kindness*. May all our comings and goings be under the seal of God’s loving care. May we *seek and serve*, in everyone we meet, Jesus, Who is Lord forever and ever. Amen.



2021 Epiphany Blessing of the Home

Blessing of Epiphany Chalk *by a priest*

V. Our help is in the Name of the Lord

R. Who made Heaven and earth.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

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 the saints, Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, may through their merits and intercession enjoy health of body and protection of soul. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Chalk is sprinkled with holy water.

(Rev. Philip T. Weller, *Roman Ritual: The Blessings*, Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1946, p. 39).

*Prepared by the Office for Catechesis & Evangelization
Diocese of La Crosse*

