

## Epiphany Blessing of Homes

As we celebrate Epiphany, the Magi coming to bring their gifts to the Christ-child, I would like to remind you of the house blessing that also goes with the feast. One popular religious tradition since the Middle Ages has been associated with the feast of the Epiphany: the blessing of homes with holy water (to remind us of our baptism) and chalk (an incarnational/personified image because it reminds us of the dust of the earth from which we were made). The ritual calls for the inside of the main door to be marked, with blessed chalk, the initials of the Magi and the numerals of the New Year connected with crosses:

**20 + C + M + B + 19.** The initials remind us of the legendary names of the Magi - Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar - and also stand for the Latin motto: *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless this house."

The following can be used to bless your home:

*The three wise men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar followed the star of God's Son who became human 2000 years ago. May Christ bless our dwelling and remain with us throughout the New Year.*

Please use the blessed chalk that is in back of all the churches and mark over the inside of the door with the blessed chalk: 20 + C + M + B + 19, and say "*May Christ bless this house.*"

**Please bring the pieces of chalk back or bury them at home**