

A traditional Epiphany chalking of the home

It's an ancient Christian Epiphany tradition for families to gather to ask for God's blessing on their home and all who visit or live there. Chalk is used to write a traditional symbol on the door frame, the doorstep, or close to the door of the house, along with prayers asking Jesus to visit and be present in that home.

You and your family may like to take part in this tradition. You'll need a piece of chalk and the prayers below. You might like to ask one person to do all the writing, or you may like to take turns within the family. Choose what works best for your family.

The traditional written symbol looks like this but it's written in a special order using the words below.

20 +C +M +B 19

- C M B represents the traditional names of the three wise men, kings, or Magi (Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar) as well as the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedictat*, 'May Christ bless the house.'
- The crosses represent the cross of Jesus.
- 20 and 19 is the year that is beginning.

Stand as a group by the doorframe, doorstep, or close to the main door of your house, where you will chalk the Epiphany Blessing. Ask someone to read the following words with appropriate pauses while the chalk marks are written.

The three wise men:

Caspar....

Write C

Melchior....

Leave a space after the C and write M

and Balthasar

Leave a space after the M and write B

followed the star of God's Son who became human

two thousand

Write 20 before the C M B

and eighteen years ago.

Write 19 after the C M B

May Christ

Write three crosses:

one before the C

one before the M

one before the B

bless our home and remain with us through the new year

When you're ready you may like to end with a prayer like this one:

Jesus, visit this home.

**Bless everyone who lives or visits here
with the gift of your love.**

**Help us to show your love to each other
and all those around us. Amen**