

# 20+C+M+B+26

## Catholic Home Blessing

The blessing of the home is a popular Epiphany custom. Using blessed chalk, many households mark their entrance door with the current year and with the inscription CMB, the initials of Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar, the traditional names of the magi. The inscription also stands for the Latin phrase Christus Mansionem Benedicat, which means "Christ, bless this home." Each room of the house may also be blessed with an accompanying prayer. The door way over each room is marked in the same way as the entrance door and sprinkled with holy water. The symbols written in chalk over the door should look like this: 20+C+M+B+26

Begin by having all family members gather outside the front door. All make the sign of the cross.

One person will then read this prayer:

**Leader:** Peace be to this house.

**All:** And to all who dwell herein.

**Leader:** 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.

Enter your home and read the Magnificat, the hymn of praise sung by the Blessed Virgin Mary in Luke's Gospel after being greeted by Elizabeth. During this, sprinkle the area you are in with holy water. After that is complete:

**All:** 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.

Leader: 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 and lead us not into temptation,

**All:** But deliver us from evil.

**Leader:** All they from Saba shall come

**All:** Bringing gold and frankincense.

**Leader:** O Lord, hear my prayer.

**All:** And let my cry come unto Thee.

**Leader:** 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.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** 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.

**All:** 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.

**Leader:** 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.

**All:** Amen.

After the prayers are recited, walk throughout your home sprinkling each room with holy water. Then write the initials of the Magi (with the blessed chalk) connected with crosses at the top of your front door. Then the numbers of the year. The numbers will be split so that they are on each side of the initials.

Here's an example: 20 + C + M + B + 26

Adapted from Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy National Conference of Catholic Bishops © 1988, pp. 297-301