

Epiphany Inscription Over the Doorway of the Home

20 + C + M + B + 24

The letters have two meanings. They are the initials of the names of the Three Magi: Saints Caspar, Melchior and Balthasar. They also abbreviate the Latin words "Christus Mansionem benedicat" "May Christ bless this home."

The crosses over the doorway represent, first the protection of the Precious Blood of Christ, whom we invoke (recall that the doorways of the Israelites were sprinkled with the blood of the Paschal lamb, to protect them from death in Egypt). The other three crosses represent the holiness of the Three Magi, who became saints. The inscription is made above the front door, so that all who enter and depart this year may enjoy God's blessing. The inscription is made with chalk, a product of clay (recall that God formed Adam of clay): this recalls Our Lord's human nature, taken of the Virgin Mary by the Adorable and Eternal Word of God.

To Use the Chalk:

The head of the household reads the Prologue of Saint John's Gospel, followed by the Our Father, and the Collect of the Epiphany; then he writes the inscription for this year above the front door of the home with blessed chalk.

Prologue of Saint John's Gospel:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to give testimony of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light. That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, he gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in his name. Who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Collect of the Epiphany:

O God, who by the star this day revealed Thine only-begotten Son to all nations, grant that we, who know Thee now by faith, may be brought one day before the vision of Thy majesty. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Thy Son, Who with Thee liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God forever and ever. Amen.

Epiphany House Blessing

The lintel of the main door of the house (and all other doors at will) is marked with the blessed chalk by the head of the household in the following way:

20 + C + M + B + 24

The prayer which is said while marking the door is as follows:

The Three Wise Men

"C" *Caspar*

"M" *Melchior*

"B" *and Balthasar*

Followed the star of God's Son who became man

"20" *two thousand*

"24" *and twenty-four years ago.*

"+ +" *May Christ bless our home*

"+ +" *and remain with us throughout the New Year.*

*Almighty God incline your ear.
Bless us and all who are gathered here
send us your holy angel
who will defend us and fill with grace
all who dwell here. Amen.*

