

Take the blessed chalk and first write the initials of the three Wise Men, connected with Crosses, over the inside of your front door (on the lintel, if possible). Then write the year, breaking up the numbers and the year so that they fall on both sides of the initials. It should look like this:

**20 C+M+B+ 20**

With the “20” being the millennium and century, the “C” standing for the first Wise Man, Caspar, the “M” standing for Melchior, the “B” standing for Balthasar, and the “12” standing for the decade and year. It is also popularly believed that the Kings’ initials also stand for “Christus mansionem benedicat” (“Christ bless this house”).

Note that some write the first Wise Man’s name as “Gaspar,” “Kasper,” or “Jasper,” so the initials would be “G+M+B” or “K+M+B” or “J+M+B.” In any case, these initials over our doorway serve to remind us of who the Magi saw and how they saw Him. They remind us to adore Him as they did. The chalk markings remain over the door until Pentecost.

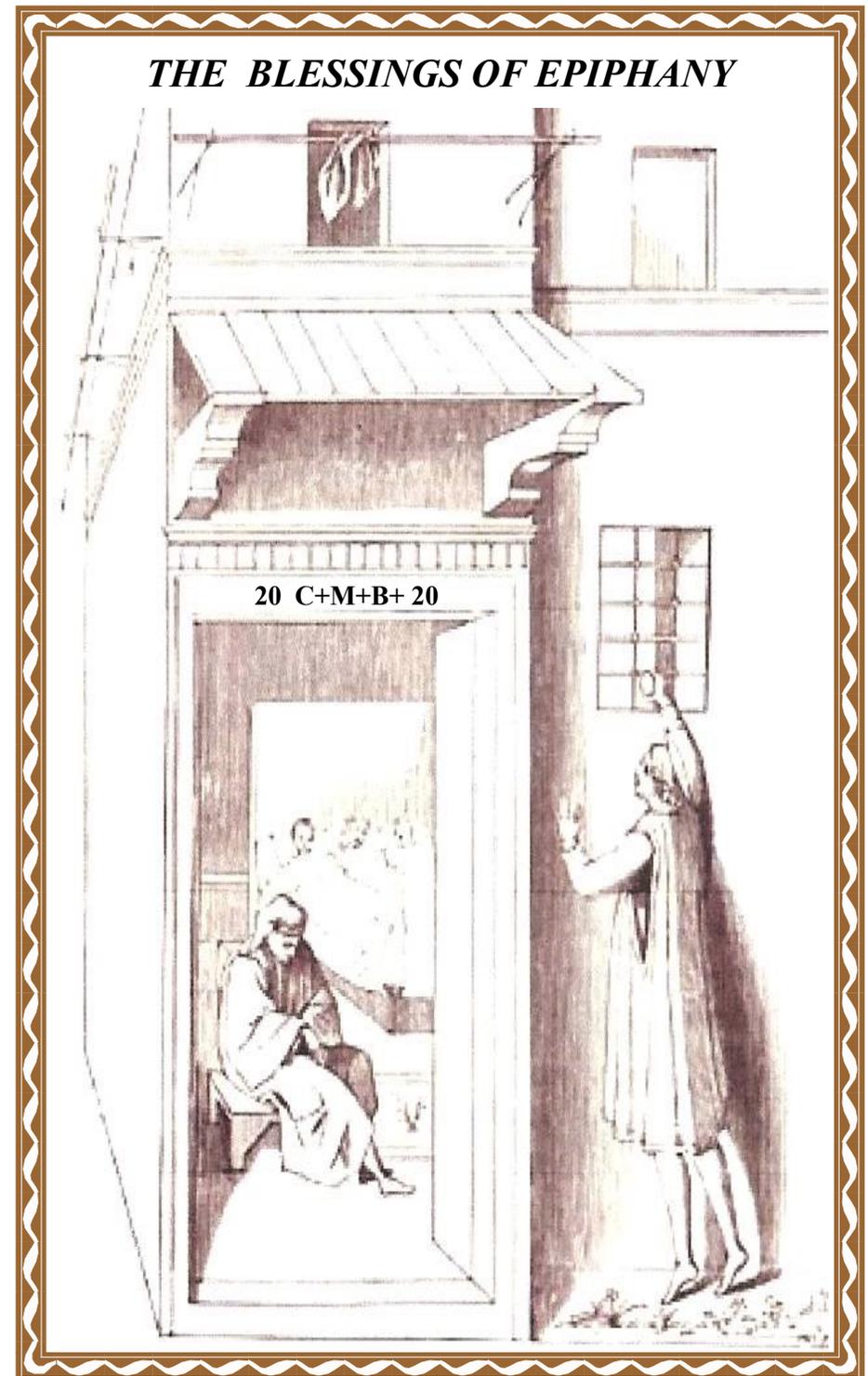
It is a popular custom among some people that all who enter or re-enter their home for the first time after the blessing should step with their **right foot** across the threshold so as to start things off “on the right foot.”

It is customary in some religious orders to choose a new patron Saint on this day for the coming year. Families can also do this, choosing a new Saint by designating someone (e.g., head of the house, etc.) to select the new Patron. This can also be done by drawing lots, having family members write down their choices and choosing a Saint at random, allowing the person who presents the best argument for a particular Saint, etc. It would be very beneficial if the person who chooses the patron Saint, shares that information with the rest of the family. This could be done by researching information and finding art work depicting the life of the saint that has been chosen.

In Rome today, a miraculous image of Our Lord as Divine Infant, **Il Santo Bambino di Ara Coeli**, is honored, after having been brought out from its home in the Church of Santa Maria di Ara Coeli on the Capitoline Hill in Rome on Christmas Eve to be revered by the Roman people.

When the Octave of the Epiphany (13 January, which is the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord is concluded), the feeling of Christmastide begins to wane. It is either January 6, or 13th that some people take down their Christmas decorations, though many wait until the eve of Candlemas on February 2. Though the Season of Christmas liturgically ends with the Octave of the Epiphany, January 13, the celebration of Christ’s entry into the world and His childhood doesn’t truly end until Candlemas (also known as “The Feast of the Presentation and Purification) when we celebrate Christ’s being presented in the Temple and Mary’s Purification. \*(excerpted from [www.fisheaters.com/epiphany](http://www.fisheaters.com/epiphany))

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## FOR FAMILIES WHO PRACTICE TRADITIONS

\*At Mass celebrated on January 6th, it is customary for the Celebrant to bless water and chalk in honor of The Epiphany. When Mass is over, you will bring Epiphany Water and your blessed chalk home with you. Bring a small container in which to transport your holy water and chalk.

When you get home, and the family gathers to say the following Epiphany prayers it is good to meditate on the meaning of the Epiphany water and chalk and what they signify. Other than a blessing to protect your home, the Epiphany water (afterwards to be used as regular Holy Water), recalls the waters of the Jordan, and is a visible reminder of Christ's Divinity, of Jesus' revealing Himself as God at His Baptism, when we heard the words from the Father: "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." The chalk announces the visit of the three Magis. This rite of blessing the home - led by a priest, if possible, or the **head of the house** if no priest is available - goes like this:

### Upon entering the house:

Head of the house: Peace be to this house.

All: And to all who dwell herein.

Head: 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

### During the Magnificat, the rooms are sprinkled with holy water and incensed.

All: My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For He hath regarded the humility of His hand maiden. For behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done great things to me, and holy is His Name. And His Mercy is from generation unto generations upon them that fear Him. He hath shewed might in His arm, He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath received Israel, His servant, being mindful of His mercy. As He spoke to our Fathers, Abraham and His seed forever.

### After this is completed:

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.

Head: 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 us not into temptation.

All: But deliver us from evil.

Head: All they from Saba shall come

All: Bringing gold and frankincense

Head: O Lord, hear my prayer

All: And let my cry come unto Thee.

Head: 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.

Head: 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.

Head: 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.

