

Happy New Year!

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

There's an old custom of blessing one's home on the feast of the Epiphany. It's also a great way to mark the beginning of a new year. Below is a very simple form for blessing your house. You may use as much or as little of what's below as suits your own circumstances. This blessing can be used by those who live in large homes or those who live in small apartments. It's a blessing that might be used by those who live alone as well as those who live with a family or housemates. Please know that you are in my prayers (and I ask for yours!) as we celebrate Christ's manifestation to all peoples at Epiphany and as we begin a new year as God's people, the faithful of Holy Family Parish.

Peace,
Fr. Fleming

The Blessing of a House on the Feast of the Epiphany

The Feast of the Epiphany is the day for blessing homes and the blessing begins with marking the doorway with blessed chalk. *(You may mark your front door, or another door if it's the one you and those who live with you usually use - or both! You may mark the inside or the outside - or both! You may mark the lintel above the door or the door itself.)*

The traditional marking of the doorway commemorates the three magi (traditionally named Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar) and gives the calendar year already recently begun. The markings for this year are:

20 + C + M + B + 11

(After the door is marked, one person leads in making the sign of the Cross and prays the text that follows it)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Peace be with this house and with all who live here.
Blessed be the name of the Lord, now and forever.**

**During these days of the Christmas season,
we keep this feast of Epiphany,
celebrating the manifestation of Christ to the Magi.**

**Today Christ is manifest to us!
Today this home is a holy place.**

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(One person is invited to read the gospel)

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Saint John

**In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
All things came to be through him,
and without him nothing came to be.
*And the Word became flesh
and made his dwelling among us,
and we saw his glory,
the glory as of the Father's only Son,
full of grace and truth.***

All who are present proceed from one room to the next, asking God's blessing on all that takes place in that room and saying,

**Lord, bless this room
and bless those who dwell here
with faith, hope and love.**

Coming last to the dining room or kitchen table, all join in praying the Lord's Prayer...

Let us pray in the words Jesus gave us: Our Father...

and then one person prays:

**Lord God of Heaven and earth,
You revealed your only begotten Son to every nation
by the guidance of a star.
Bless this house and all who live here.
Fill us with the light of Christ,
that our concern for others may reflect your love.**

**We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

All join in singing a Christmas hymn (*Silent Night* or *O Come All Ye Faithful* or *We Three Kings*) and perhaps enjoy a meal or some refreshments.

SUGGESTION: Place this paper and the blessed chalk in an envelope or small bag and store it with your Christmas decorations for next year!