

Blessing the Chalk

L - Our help is the name of the Lord:

C - The maker of heaven and earth.

L - The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in:

C - From this time forth for evermore.

L - Let us pray. Loving God, bless this chalk which you have created, and grant that all who enter this house through this door may see it as a reminder of your loving presence, promised and provided through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C - Amen.

The Epiphany Story

L - A reading from Matthew's gospel.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

"And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Instructions for Blessing the Home

Using the chalk to mark the lintel of your front door (or front porch step) as follows:

20 + C + M + B + 21 saying:

L - The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar followed the star to the home of Jesus.

May Christ bless *our* home and remain with us throughout the new year.

C - Amen.

Closing prayer

L - Let us pray. Gracious Lord, visit this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless all who live or visit here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may show your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. Guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, in the name of Jesus, now and for ever.

C - Amen.