

Chalking the Doors Reflection – Janet Franck 3/1/21

Some of you may remember a few years ago taking home from Church a piece of chalk to mark your door with an Epiphany blessing (traditionally done on 12th night which is 5th January). I thought it might be appropriate to do this again in 2021.

This Epiphany tradition is a simple but meaningful act of witness which symbolises Christian willingness to offer hospitality and shelter to the Magi on their journey to Bethlehem and a reminder that Christ is incarnate in the love and care we show each other in our ordinary lives together. It's also a prayer of blessing for our homes. All you need is a small piece of chalk – which you might like to bless with these words:

Bless, O Lord God, this chalk, and let it be a help to humankind. Grant that we who use it with faith in your holy name, and with it inscribe the doors of our home may enjoy health and protection; through Christ our Lord. Amen

For 2021 this is what is written: 20 + C + M + B + 21

The first and last two numbers are the number of the year (2021), and the letters in between represent the names traditionally given to the magi (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar) and also abbreviate a Latin phrase which translates as 'May Christ bless the house'. The + signs represent the cross.

As you chalk the letters you may like to say the following:

As the three Wise Men followed the star of God's Son who became man, may Christ bless our home and remain with us through the New Year.

If you want to make it a bit more special you could use the longer liturgy on the reverse of this page. Whatever you decide to do it would be great to hear about it and maybe even see some pictures of your door markings if you would like to share.

A short liturgy that may be used for “chalking the doors” on 12th night (5th January)



The most senior member of the family says the words in normal print and everyone join in with the words in bold.

Peace be to this house.

And to all who live here.

A Reading from Luke 1: 46-55

My soul glorifies the LORD and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me- holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.

Prayers for your household and any other prayers, finishing with

The Lord's Prayer

After the prayers the initials of the Magi and the date are inscribed upon the doors with the chalk:

20 + C + M + B + 21

and these words are said:

As the three Wise Men followed the star of God's Son who became man, may Christ bless our home and remain with us through the New Year.

Visit, O Lord, this home with the gladness of your presence. Bless it and all who live or visit here with the gift of your love; and grant that we may show your love to each other and all whose lives we touch. Lord Jesus Christ, be with us now and for ever.

Amen.

Additional resources available on <https://reflectionary.org>