

FAMILIES FORMING DISCIPLES

EPIPHANY AND THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

TOPIC: EPIPHANY AND THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD – JESUS’ MISSION

FAMILY AT-HOME MISSION ACTIVITY

Your Family At-Home Mission is to (together as a family) mark the mantle of your front door with chalk (blessed, if possible) and pray the Family Epiphany Blessing, and also to find baptism items or sacramental(s) that were received by each family member at his/her baptism, and place them on your home altar/prayer space. Be ready to share your Family Epiphany Blessing experience, as well as your front door mantle (take a picture) and baptismal sacramental(s), at Week 3’s gathering of families.

Step 1: Watch one or both of the Epiphany videos below:

- Three Wise Men - Matthew 2 | The Magi Christmas Bible Story for Kids | Sharefaithkids.com (4:50)
- The Feast of the Epiphany (6:34)
Teens & tweens



Step 2: After learning about the Epiphany, use the Family Epiphany Blessing (see below) and chalk, to ask God’s blessing upon your home together as a family.

Family Epiphany Blessing

“The practice of writing a special code over the entrance to a home with blessed chalk is a centuries-old traditional blessing that takes place each January. It’s a reminder of God’s presence in our daily lives, and a dedication of the year and everything that will happen during it, to God. It’s also a great witness for our guests, not to mention that it looks pretty cool!” (From CathFamily)

How to do it...

1. Take a stick of chalk that's been blessed by a priest or deacon, and write above your home's front entrance (inside or outside), 20 + C + M + B + 21. (Replace 21 with the last two digits of the current year)

2. A family member reads this explanation:
"The letters C, M, and B have two meanings. They are the initials of the traditional names of the three magi who brought gifts to Jesus sometime soon after his birth: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. They also abbreviate the Latin words *Christus Mansionem Benedicat*, which translates to "May Christ bless this house." The '+' signs represent the cross and the numbers, the year."

3. The head of the house leads the prayer:
Dear God, we ask your blessings on our home and family and anyone who visits here. We invite your Son, Jesus, to be a part of our family and to always be with us in our home, in our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows. We thank you and we love you. We make the following words of Joshua our own: "As for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). *Hail Mary*... We ask all this in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

(adapted from <https://cathfamily.org/chalking-the-door/>;
for an alternative prayer, see the [USCCB's Blessing of the Home and Household on Epiphany](#))



Step 3: Watch the Baptism videos that are appropriate for your child's age.

For younger children:

If your parish does not have FORMED watch:
• Catholic Kids Media - Jesus Gets Baptized?! - Baptism of the Lord



If your parish does have FORMED watch:
• Born into the Kingdom: The Miracle of Baptism, Brother Francis Episode 4



For tweens & teens:

• Catholic Central - Baptism



Step 4: Next, find baptism items or sacramental(s) that were received by each family member at his/her baptism. These could be baptismal candles, or other sacramentals, such as a prayer book, rosary, or cross, or even the baptismal clothing. Place the items on your home altar or in your prayer space. Make sure you have at least one candle for your family to light at our Week 3 gathering if at home, or be prepared to bring an item to show during the gathering.

Step 5: Get ready to share about your Family Epiphany Blessing experience, as well as your front door mantle (bring a picture) and baptismal sacramental(s), at Week 3's gathering of families.



**DID
YOU
KNOW** 

The Christmas season concludes with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

How did/will you continue to celebrate Christmas?

(For example, some families leave up their Nativity crèche or other decorations.)

January is full of important days for our country and for our Church. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is the third Monday of January and is a federal holiday in the United States. We remember Rev. Dr. King's courageous witness for racial justice and for the intrinsic and equal dignity of every human life, no matter the color of one's skin, place of origin, or ethnic background. January 22 is a Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children in the dioceses of the United States, and we continue to pray for an end to abortion and strive for a culture that reverences all human life. January 25 is the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul the Apostle, an amazing witness of the power of God's mercy and grace. How will your family observe these days?