

House blessing on the Feast of the Epiphany



We invite you to adopt this custom in your family. The family gathers to ask God's blessing on their home and on those who live

in or visit the home. It is an invitation for Jesus to be a daily guest in our home, our comings and goings, our conversations, our work and play, our joys and sorrows.

A traditional way of doing this is to use chalk to write above the home's entrance, C + M + B + (current year). The letters C, M, B have two meanings. They are the initials of the traditional names of the three magi: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. They are also an abbreviation of the Latin words *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless this house." The "+" signs represent the cross and the phrase contains the current year.

Instructions for Blessing the Home:

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

20 + C + M + B + 22 while saying:

The three Wise Men, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar followed the star of God's Son who became human two thousand and twenty-two years ago. May Christ bless our home and remain with us throughout the New Year. Amen.

Then offer the following prayer: *Visit, O blessed Lord, 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 manifest your love to each other and to all whose lives we touch. May we grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of you; guide, comfort, and strengthen us in peace, O Jesus Christ, now and forever. Amen*

"Chalking the door" is a way to celebrate and literally mark the occasion of the Epiphany and God's blessing of our lives and home. With time the chalk will fade. As it does, we let the meaning of the symbols written sink into the depths of our heart and are manifest in our words and actions the Latin words, *Christus mansionem benedicat*, "May Christ bless this house."

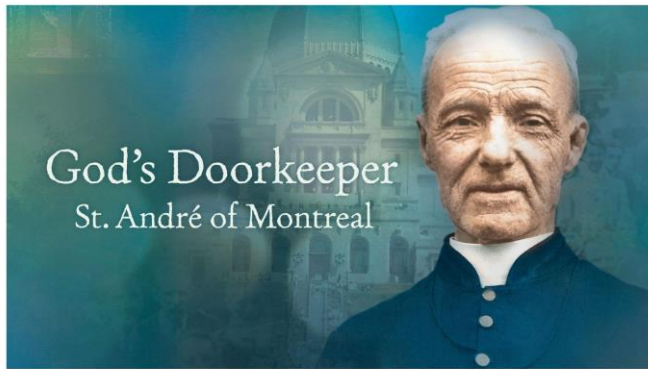
Don't stop celebrating: After Christmas Day

The secular world "prepares" for Christmas with months of garish decoration, holiday treats, and spending sprees, but when December 26 rolls around, the world already feels that Christmas is "over." At most it will allow itself a day or two of recuperation from excess jollity and then get back to work. In a best-case scenario, decorations might stay up till January 1st or a bit later, for "ringing in the new year." After that, the season of celebration is over. Catholics ought to have a totally different conception of Christmas. Before Christmas, we observe the penitential season of Advent, preparing for the great feast without too much overt joy. Traditionally, families would decorate the Christmas tree together before the great day of Christmas. Families would attend Christmas Mass together. It is very important for us not to surrender to the secular approach that, in a way, celebrates Christmas before Christmas and not afterward. We should really make an effort — in the way our homes are decorated, the way we observe Sundays and holy days, the stories we read and the other activities we do in the house — to keep the spirit of Christmas alive, even if at a "low burn," especially throughout the period from December 26th to February 2nd. *Yes, this great feast is that big of a deal!* Such observance also becomes a countercultural catechesis in one of the central mysteries of the Christian faith: the Incarnation of the Son of God. This is the pivot point of all human history and of the story of each man, woman, and child.

SPONSOR FORMS

Before you are asked to be a sponsor for a Baptism or for the Sacrament of Confirmation please be sure you are indeed a registered member, in good standing, of your church. This happens a lot around this time of year where people have been coming to church on a regular basis, not using offering envelopes, and think they are members. It makes it very difficult for us to issue a sponsor certificate when you are not registered and the priest does not recognize your face. This also applies to Confirmation students wanting their older siblings to be their sponsors--make sure they are attending and shaking the priest's hand after Mass. Please contact the church office if you have questions, 637-4269.





God's Doorkeeper
St. André of Montreal

God's Doorkeeper: St. André of Montreal

This week, we celebrate the memorial of a humble doorkeeper, St. André of Montreal. Learn how this man became a great saint through his small acts of love!

Our parish has a FORMED subscription. Visit formed.org/signup and select our parish. Scan the QR code to download the FORMED app to your phone.



An offering from the AUGUSTINE INSTITUTE and graciosa press

END-OF-THE-YEAR CHARITABLE GIFT GIVING

Please take advantage of your end of the year charitable gift giving tax deduction and please remember your parish. This deduction can significantly reduce your income taxes while providing meaningful support to numerous financial areas here in our parish.

BE NOT AFRAID

Perhaps priesthood has crossed your mind, but fear pushes the idea away:

- My friends would laugh if they heard I was thinking about the priesthood!
- My parents would be shocked.
- My mom wants grandkids.
- I'm scared to death of speaking in public.
- I'm nowhere near holy enough.
- I don't want to give up sex.
- I'll be lonely.
- Seminary may be too hard for me.
- Being a priest seems lame.

These fears are very common, even for men who are already in seminary. But literally thousands of men have had the same concerns and then went on to become holy and effective priests. Contact Fr. Mauricio Tabera-Vasquez, Vocation Recruiter, (732) 562-2457, vocations@diometuchen.org



2022 OUTREACH REPORT CARD



We help not only our own parishioners but also people and families in our community and families in our local schools. We help with all sorts of bills from medical to food. Here is our 2022 Outreach Report Card: We received a total of \$17,064.68 in donations during 2022. Here is a breakdown of all expenses for 2022: Medical Ins.-\$10,084.14, Rent-\$3262.00, Electric-\$1300.00, Heating Oil-\$429.78, Garbage pickup-\$176.44, Car insurance-\$709.60, Christmas presents-\$188.35, Food cards-\$1900.00(this includes Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas). Total expenses-\$18,050.31. Easter- we helped 30 families with Easter Baskets for 57 children and full meals, Thanksgiving we helped 40 families with full Thanksgiving dinners, and Christmas we helped 42 families with full dinners and Christmas presents enough for 93 children. We have super generous parishioners who come to the rescue every holiday, they truly take to heart the words of Jesus, “*tend my sheep*”. May God bless you.

JOIN US everyday (Monday-Saturday) after the 8:30am Mass to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet in our Chapel for the people and country of Ukraine.

Thanksgiving

In this season of Thanksgiving, why not celebrate your marriage and its many blessings by attending a Marriage Encounter Weekend? A Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend gives you the time and tools to revitalize romance, deepen communication, and nourish the spirituality in your marriage. The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend will be held February 4 – 6. Please apply ASAP as space is limited. Phone 1-732-904-9636 for application and information (Tom & Ruth DeFalco). Visit us at: www.wwme.org for more information.

Sanctuary Lamp / Bread & Wine / Divine Mercy Candle

Please contact the church office, 908-637-4269, if you would like to book the Sanctuary Lamp, Bread & Wine, or Divine Mercy Candle for the week in memory of or in honor of a loved one. The cost is only \$10 for the week. The name(s) will be placed in the bulletin and announced at all Masses for the week it is booked.