

champs

Center for Healthy Aging Ministries, Programs & Services

***From the Champs Parish Nurse***

## **Why do a house blessing?**

The ritual of a house blessing is not new. If you start to research the custom you will find that several faith denominations have a ceremony and each is different from the other in some respects. Dating back to the earliest days of Christianity, the ritual protected inhabitants from evil spirits and typically happened during the Epiphany, the 12 holy days after Christmas. In the Christian faith, house blessings are primarily a tradition in the Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Episcopal Church. Other faiths have similar rituals that invoke spiritual protection, like the mezuzah posted in doorways in Jewish homes, the blessing by Buddhist monks to ensure peace and prosperity or the burning of herbs to purify the home done in some Native American religions. ([http://www.acfnewsource.org/religion/house\\_blessing.html](http://www.acfnewsource.org/religion/house_blessing.html))

The house blessing is a way to draw people together and recognize the importance of Christian life within your home. God is present every day in our lives and His presence in our home extends to the family members and all who enter the walls of the dwelling. It is a way to connect our faith

from the church altar into our daily lives and the place we reside. In Joshua 24:15 the Bible states, "...And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." Probably you recognize the last sentence of this verse as one commonly seen on plaques in homes.

Generally a house blessing is done when a family or individual moves into a new residence, however as mentioned earlier, some do it on an annual basis – especially during the Epiphany season. During the Lutheran ritual, family, friends and the pastor gather together and a blessing is said aloud in each room starting with the home's entrance and proceeding room by room except the bathroom. The ceremony concludes with those assembled saying the Lord's Prayer. The house blessing reflects the connection of family, home and faith in a significant gesture of one's faith.

*Proverbs 3:33 (NIV):*

*"The Lord's curse is on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the righteous."*



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