

A Service of Gratitude and Dedication for a Child Entrusted by God to New Parents

Welcome - Reverend

God made human beings so that they are attracted to one another. Sometimes these feelings of attraction deepen. People fall in love and get married. Marriage and the formation of durable, loving families is another thing God made - and celebrates!

With their older daughter, (name), (Parents' names) stand before us holding, (child's name) the fruit of their God-given love. (Name) is Christian; (Name) is Jewish. Both have received nurture and guidance from their diverse traditions. Both are resolved that (children's names) grow up with a deep understanding of the value of their diverse spiritual and cultural heritage. Surely we support them, for a religious faith, no matter how devout, that hides its eyes and heart from the richness of other traditions is impoverished.

(Parents' names) stand before us now to affirm their gratitude to Almighty God for the gift of life entrusted to them. (Parents' names) also stand before us to affirm, not depart, their faiths. Thus, they stand together on this occasion to demonstrate the highest calling and the desired end of all real faith: love.

Words of Hope - (Reader One - Grandmother)

O Lord our God I am grateful for new beginnings, for the bond of new life that links one generation to another. Thankful for the blessings of family, for the love and care that brings meaning and happiness to our lives, I rejoice with my children at the birth of their second child, my grandchild, (Name). May they grow together as a family in health and in strength, in harmony, wisdom and love, and may their home be hospitable to Your Word, and may it be a place filled with acts of kindness.

The Lessons - Reverend

Let us hear now the counsel of sacred writings from the Christian and Hebrew Scriptures.

(Reader Two) From St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians -

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of divine glory, God may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner person with power through the divine Spirit, and that God's presence may find a dwelling place in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all God's children, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of the Almighty who lives in you that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (3:14-19, paraphrased)

(Reader One) From the Book of Deuteronomy -

"Hear, O Israel, the Lord is your God, the Lord only. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Keep these words

that I am commanding you this day... and teach them diligently to your children..."
(6: 4,5,7)

Chorus "Jesus loves the little children"

Jesus loves the little children - All the children of the world - Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his site - Jesus loves the little children of the world
(repeat)

The Promises - Reverend

(Parents' names), please know that the child you hold is God's child. Almighty God commends to you the temporal and spiritual care of this needy, impressionable soul.

Do you accept with thanksgiving this holy trust? {"We do."}

Do you promise to cultivate self-giving love as the foundation upon which this family will be built? {"We do."}

Do you solemnly promise to live before this child the life of humility and faith, taking great care and making sacrifices as required to surround her with sound and faith-inspired values; endeavoring always to teach your child compassion, reverence, obedience and attention to the formation of a deep spiritual center?

{"We do."}

Will you nurture your child that by your teaching and example she may be guided to accept with joy her God-given dignity and the responsibilities attending the decision to be an asset, not a liability, to the human race? {"We will."}

Again, what name is given the child? Parents reply, "(Name of child), in memory of (Name) and (Name)."

Explanation of Child's Name - (Parents)

Prayer - Reverend

Blessed and Almighty God who is above all Your creation. May Your favor attend this life gratefully received in trust from You. May (child's name) not be a human being who has spiritual experiences; may she be a spiritual being who shares with us all now a human experience. Impart grace and wisdom to (Parents' names) so that on account of their nurture, (children's names) make this a better, kinder, more enlightened world. And let all the people respond...

Amen!

Singing of "Hallelujah!"