

Coming of Age Ceremony (Female)

Opening prayer:

We have come together today to celebrate an important threshold that [full name] crosses today in the presence of family, friends and the world. Let us begin this celebration with prayer.

We are now in the presence of pure being; god's light, life, love and wisdom flow over us and through us. We know that [first name] has been loved and guided by the whole spirit of god, the holy spirit that now stands witness to this event and creates within her and within us the love and joy we feel this day. Amen.

Message:

Today marks a turning point in [first name]'s life wherein she begins the journey from dependent child to independent young woman. This is not an event, but rather a process of growing, of trying new things and of becoming. [full name] [was born to] [came into the lives of] [parents' names] so that they might be her caretakers, her role models, her teachers of life.

She has grown through much in her life. She has experienced sorrows and losses; disappointments and failures; triumphs and joys. Throughout all of it, she has depended on her parents and teachers to guide her to show her another way, to encourage her, to console her, and to congratulate her in all of the many phases of growing and learning.

Today is a special day for [first name]. It marks the beginning of a new phase of her growth wherein she embarks upon the quest of becoming an adult woman. She seeks now to find her own way in the world, to make her own unique mark and to play her part in the divine plan.

This is a day that is celebrated not only by [first name] and her family and friends, but by the world - for today another being comes of age to share in the establishment of order and peace in our world, the healing of our environment, the bringing in of light into a world that believes itself separate from the light of christ.

Today [first name] crosses a threshold that many of us present here today have crossed in the past. We relive that moment in our lives with [first name] as we join her in recommitting ourselves to our individual development and expression, to love and support our families and to serve in our world.

To those who have yet to begin this journey into adulthood, [first name] is a living model for them; she creates a path for them to follow when they are ready to embrace this phase of growth in their own lives.

Today's ceremony has deep roots in the indigenous cultures of the world. The custom to honor a girl who has come of child-bearing age has beginnings before recorded history. A child in these cultures was often not considered a person until he or she reached the age of independence. At this time, male children were presented to the tribal community. It was then that he became a warrior - he now legally belonged and was formally accepted into the community. Female children were also presented to the community because the female energy was looked upon as a vital force of the tribe. Her power of motherhood was valued because she gave warriors to the community. The ceremony celebrated the commitment and responsibility the young woman had to the community. The community in its turn accepted her as a committed and respected member. This ceremony celebrates that tradition of recognizing the girl moving into womanhood.

Today [first name] presents herself to her family and friends and the larger community in which she lives as a vital force in the world. [first name] takes her place as another adult in the world, committed to maintaining and preserving the traditions and values she holds dear and to making changes for the greater good of all.

Scripture:

Let us now read from Luke 1:45-49 which comes after the visitation of the angel Gabriel to the virgin Mary, who was to become the mother of Jesus and the divine mother of us all.

Luke 1:46-49

- And mary said, "my soul magnifies the lord, and my spirit rejoices in god my savior, for he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden. For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. (rsv)

We know that while [first name]'s earthly parents have given her tools and teachings to follow, God is the source of all wisdom and guidance in [first name]'s life. We acknowledge that power now, in the name and through the power and the authority we share with Jesus Christ. Amen.

Lighting of the candles:

[father's name], [rises] please come forward now and light the candle that represents your influence and presence in [first name]'s life. [moves up to light his candle and returns to his seat.] [first name]'s father has taught her the values that he holds dear, has sought to guide her, teach her and empower her through his belief in her and through his love. The impact that he has made in [first name]'s life is represented in the candle that he now lights.

[mother's name], [rises] please come forward and light the candle that represents your influence and presence in [first name]'s life. [moves up to light her candle and return to her seat.] [first name]'s mother has trained her, nurtured her, loved her and modeled for her the roles of a woman, a mother, a wife. The impact she has made on [first name]'s life is represented in the candle she now lights.

[full name], [rises] please come forward and light the candle that represents your own unique life. [moves up to light her candle with her parents' candles] [first name] uses what she has been given from both her father and her mother to form her own unique life, following her own unique path. [lights the candle and moves to the podium]

Vows of commitment:

Let us now witness the vow that [first name] makes in her commitment to herself.

Commitment to Self:

I, [full name] now commit myself to my own highest good. I will accept responsibility for all aspects of my life. I resolve to treat myself with gentleness, kindness, forgiveness and love. I retain the power to consciously make the choices in my life that will bring me to the highest unfoldment of my spiritual nature. I am committed to my own spiritual development and now call upon the activity of the holy spirit to move through me activating my spiritual powers now.

Let us now witness the vow that [first name] makes in her commitment to family.

Commitment to Family:

I, [full name], now commit my love and support to my family. I promise to give of myself in loving support of my parents and siblings, always speaking the truth to them in love. I now commit myself to the family that god will bring into the world through me that my love and the light that i am may nurture, protect and support those i love to the end of my earthly life.

Let us now witness the vow that [first name] makes in her commitment to serve the world.

Commitment to Serve the World:

I, [full name], now commit to develop my own unique skills, talents and spiritual gifts to their highest level; that i will extend myself in service to others and in ways that make the world a better place to live; that i may use my gifts in the world to complete the mission that god has begun in me from my birth.

Crowning by Mother:

We will now witness the transition from girlhood into womanhood as symbolized by the placement of the crown of womanhood by [first name]'s mother, [mother's name]. The crown symbolizes the powers of womanhood that are the legacy from mother to daughter.

[mother folds back the veil and crowns daughter; [first name] then comes to face minister]

Blessing:

[full name], you have made a commitment to yourself, to your family and to the world that your part in the divine plan of god will be fulfilled. May you know from this moment forward that you are always divinely protected and divinely loved; that you have taken your place in a safe and loving universe and that the holy spirit of god moves in and through you now and forever. Amen.

[meaning of the name change]

Presentation to the community:

[please turn and face your family and friends]

To the family and friends of this young woman and to the world, I present to you Ms.[full name]!

[full name]

[first name]

[parents' names]

[father's name]

[mother's name]