

At-Home Graduation Recognition and Blessing

Gather in a space where your whole family will feel comfortable. This could be a kitchen table, a living room, a porch... anywhere! Light a candle and have a bowl or cup of water nearby to remember your Baptism.

This may also be done via video chat (FaceTime, Zoom, Hangouts, etc.) if you desire to invite more family, friends, and faith mentors to be a part of the experience.

At any time, you may choose to add music or songs. You might sing some of the graduate's (or your family's) favorite hymns or songs from church.

SHARE: Begin by sharing memories as a family.

- For what are you most proud of this graduate?
- What are some of the graduate's favorite memories from school?
- What are the family's favorite memories of the graduate, during their time in school?
- What do you look forward to seeing this graduate accomplish in the future?
- How has this graduate shared the light and love of Christ to your family and community?

READ: 2 Corinthians 4:7-10 (NRSV)

But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies.

TALK:

- *For the family:* After reading the above Scripture together, what words of advice do you have for your graduate?
- *For the graduate:* How might the message of this Scripture apply to the next season of your life?
- *For the family:* What "treasures" and gifts do you see in this graduate?
- *For the graduate:* what "treasures" and gifts do you see in yourself?

PRAY:

In every beginning is an ending, O Lord, and in every end something begins. (*Name*) is graduating from (*name of school*) and is ready now for new learning and experiences. Grant that childhood's innocence and hope may remain alive in *them*, bringing joy as *they* mature. Grant that *they* may hear your still small voice in *their* heart saying, "This is the way;

walk in it." Help *them* preserve old friendships while creating new ones. Grant that we who love *them* may help *them* find *their* own voice, *their* own words and *their* own work in Christ's true way, who knows the person *they* were created to be; we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Adapted from *Changes: Prayers and Services Honoring Rites of Passage* (Church Publishing, 2007)

BLESS: Pray this blessing to the graduate.

May you remember that God is above you, watching over you as a good shepherd,
That God is below you, ready to lift you up in your weakest moments,
That God is behind you to give you encouragement when you want to give up and turn back.

God is in front of you, calling you forward in faith, even when you can't see how it's going to work out.

God is beside you holding your hand no matter what you are going through.

But most of all, God is within you, as close as every breath you take.

And that's, my brothers and sisters, what makes all the difference. Amen.

- The Rev. Malcolm Marler