

A Rite of Passage Ceremony
Unity Church of Practical Christianity
Metarie, LA
Bethany Thorne, December 1996

Welcome to a very special event in the lives of our children. Our church family is a special family — kind of extended, but a family none-the-less. Since we are a family, families share their special moments, and, we wish to share this rite of passage with all of you.

Almost all cultures have rites of passage for individuals as they grow and mature on their sacred journey throughout life. These rites symbolize certain accomplishments for the individual involved.

As we join in a sacred prayerful state of mind, please focus your love and Christ energy on our blessed children who are undertaking one of their first rites of passage.

(Lights go out)

Children enter with lighted candles and stand in a line facing the congregation in the front of church.

Starting from left to right, each child steps forward, recites the following, and places their lighted candle in the candle holders, then returns to their place in line.

Children recite each in their own turn:

I, [Name], present my Christ light to God and the universe in the presence of my loving church family. My Christ light shines brightly forevermore. It is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness.

Congregation (after all the children have placed their candles):

I see how brightly your young Christ Light shines. As you travel long your spiritual path, may your light shine brighter¹ creating a beacon of God. If you ever need our love and help, know we are there with you always.

MINISTER: Who presents these children to God, asking this recognition of their spiritual unfoldment and growth?

Parents: We do.

MINISTER: Who will stand for these children representing their spiritual education?

UNITEEN LEADER (OR MINISTRY DIRECTOR): I (we) do.

MINISTER: How have these children been prepared for this important step in their spiritual growth?

UNITEEN LEADER (MINISTRY DIRECTOR, ETC...): They have been taught the Unity Principles of Truth with love, understanding, and fun and they are ready to undertake this new step on their spiritual journey.

MINISTER (to all the children): As you learn and grow in your faith, each of you take certain steps and we celebrate our accomplishments along the way. Now is a time we celebrate with you.

What is our belief about God?

CHILDREN: There is only ONE Presence and ONE Power in all the universe—God, the good, omnipotent and all powerful, everywhere present, my kind, loving parent who is always with me.

MINISTER: Where do we find God?

CHILDREN: God is present everywhere in everything—even in the rocks, the trees, the wind, a song of a bird, and in all of us and in all the universe.

MINISTER: Who is Jesus the Christ?

CHILDREN: He is our older brother, our way shower who came to show us “The Way”. Through his teachings, we joyously follow in His Footsteps.

MINISTER: What are Jesus’ most important messages?

CHILDREN: Jesus gave us 2 Great Commandments. The first is that we are to love the Lord, Our God with all our heart our mind, and our soul. The second is to

love our neighbor as ourselves. This is the way.

MINISTER: How do we treat God's Earth?

CHILDREN: We are to be caretakers of our earth including all the animals, plants, and people. We are not the rulers, but God's stewards of our garden paradise, always striving for global peace, love, and unity.

MINISTER: How can you use God's guidance to help you along your spiritual journey?

CHILDREN: Through the Power of God, my thoughts can change my life. I can choose to let go of things that are hurtful and unpleasant. I can choose to think loving thoughts and do loving things. I talk to God. I listen to God. I use The Truth I am learning to be the best ME I can be!

MINISTER: I am pleased to accept these candidates.
Do you promise to do your best to live up to the Unity Principles?

CHILDREN: Yes, I do.

MINISTER: Do you promise to follow in Jesus' footsteps by keeping in mind His teachings?

CHILDREN: Yes, I do.

MINISTER: Do you promise to be a guiding light to the younger children to show them, by your example, The Way?

CHILDREN: Yes, I do.

MINISTER: This is a very important step in your life. Each of you are traveling upon your own individual spiritual path. Sometimes we walk alone, sometimes we walk together, sometimes we even need help. But, we are ALL traveling on a spiritual path. As you leave Sunday School behind and mature into blossoming young adults, you gain more privileges, responsibilities, and respect. Remember that YOU are the only one responsible for your actions. Use what you learn here at Unity to help you make your decisions. Turn to God in meditation and prayer. Listen to the inner voice of God and learn to trust your feelings, this is God gently nudging you in the right direction. Be alert for God's guidance. God is always there, you just need to ask for help and be receptive to God's guidance. Speak to

God often, for God is always there.

Please accept these gifts as symbols of your spiritual commitment. You can reflect on their meaning and hold them in mind in those quiet times when you ask for guidance and help.

Purple Amethyst — purple is the color of spirituality
White Candle in Angel Votive Holder- to remind you of your Christ light, your quiet times communing with God— and a guardian angel to watch over you

A Certificate- honoring each of you as an unique, beautiful child of God.
Memories Card- signed by the adult members of your church family.

Many can talk the talk, but it takes true spiritual commitment to walk the talk.
Now, go forth and show the world how it's done!

Closing song: The Flower That Shattered the Stone