
New Beginnings

Opening Prayer

Leader

Loving God, with hope and confidence in our hearts, we celebrate this time of new beginnings. Be with us and guide us on our way. We ask this in Jesus' name. **All**
Amen



Reading

Invite the group to be quiet and to prepare for a reading from the Holy Book. Reader stands, holds the book up high for all to see, and then quietly reads.

Reader Jeremiah 29: 11-14

I know the plans I have in mind for you,
plans for peace not disaster,
plans to give you a future full of hope.
When you call me,
when you go to pray to me,
I will listen to you.

When you look for me
you will find me.
Yes, if you but seek me
with all your heart,
I will come to you,
and I will change your lot.
The word of the Lord.

Pause for quiet reflection, with appropriate background music.

Dreaming and Sharing

Share what brought you to this moment. Discuss the future. What are your hopes? How are you moving forward -- individually, as a group -- at this moment? Discuss how this time is an opportunity to live more like Christ. Reflect on how you can "love tenderly, act justly, and walk humbly with God." (Micah 6:8)

Pass out pieces of clay and ask each person to mold a figure or a symbol that represents his/her dreams for the future. Allow enough creative time. Then invite everyone to explain their creations.

Live justly, love tenderly, walk humbly with God.

Prayers of Petition

Response You, Lord, are the beginning and the end.

Be with us, God, as we begin our journey into the future. Help us in the hard times and guide us through our days. *Response*

Be with us, God, and calm any anxiety or fears that may arise from time to time, we pray. *Response*

(Add your own petitions.) *Response*

Together let us pray the prayer Jesus taught us to say: Our Father...



Closing Prayer

Leader

Ever-present God, at this time of new beginnings, open our hearts to the wonder that life sets before us. Help us always to see our mistakes and diversions as necessary steps to wisdom. Mold us, shape us, continue to guide us. With you by our side, this journey is a great adventure. *All Amen*

Suggestions

This ritual can be used and adapted at moments of new beginnings: in a family, at work, in school, in an organization or group.

Preparations Set up a prayer space if possible. *Needed:* a Bible, flowers, meditative music, materials for planting, supplies for making future books, and clay for molding figures.

Ritual Variations

- ◆ Plant seeds and care for them as you watch new life emerge.
- ◆ Give each one a note book, glue, scissors, old magazines and cards. Invite each person to make her/his own future book. Fill it with dreams, plans and hopes. Give it a title.
- ◆ Invite each person to write a letter to God about this new beginning.

Acknowledgments

© Copyright- "New Beginnings" ritual: [Helen Doremus, OSM](#); photo: [Sandra DeGidio, OSM](#); from [Hill Connections](http://hillconnections.org) (<http://hillconnections.org>), a web site linking [Contemplation](#) and [Social Justice](#).