

The Parental Blessing

The practice of parents blessing their children is an ancient and powerfully moving practice that goes back to the times of the Patriarchs in the Bible. Abraham blessed Isaac, his son. Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau, his sons. Jacob blessed his twelve sons and daughters. Moses blessed his people. Jesus blessed his disciples.

When it is time for the Parental Blessings, the confirmands and their parents will go to their stations (one of the pews). There the parents will stand beside the seated confirmands, place a hand on the head of their teen and read or say the blessing that they have prepared for their child. All the parents will be doing this at the same time, but they will be far enough away from each other so that each blessing can be private.

What do you put in a blessing? Here are some suggestions:

1. **Expression of Love and appreciation:** A blessing may start with you affirming your child. You may tell them how you love them, how you always have loved them and how you always will unconditionally love them. You may tell them what specifically you appreciate about them. You may tell them the gifts, the talents, the abilities, and the potential you see in them. However you do it, this should be a time when you **affirm** your child. This is not a time to correct, scold, or in anyway express disapproval. There are other times and places for that.
2. **Expression of Hope and the Future:** Here you will express what you hope and pray for them in the future. You know your child's potential better than they do. They need to see themselves positively through your eyes as you express your hopes and dreams for them.
3. **Calling Upon God's Help and Guidance:** Here you ask God to help and guide your child. Here you can express how completely dependant they need to be upon God to become what God wants them to be. Here you can rededicate your child to God and rededicate yourself to doing everything you can to continue to develop them in their relationship with our Lord.

You may, of course, put other things into your blessing. This is your child and your blessing of them.

Believe me in this – this will be powerful. They will never forget this time with you. Your prayer and heartfelt blessing of them can be one of those defining milestone moments in your child's life.