

July ~ Blessing of Visitors and Guests

Summer is a time of vacations and visitors, when people travel to see relatives and friends. Hospitality is a cornerstone of rural life, a trademark of these summer days. This hospitality can become a cornerstone of rural spirituality as well.

This blessing prompts us to greet God in the people who come to see us, to proclaim their visits a blessing to us, and to recognize that our homes and farms are indeed holy places where God can be encountered.

This blessing works well when visitors are preparing to depart. Everyone gathers in the yard or a large room. The visitors are asked to stand together, and the family host members encircle them for the blessing rite.

Opening Prayer

O God, you have made us your guests in this world, the earth you created for all. We remember how you sent your angels to Abraham and Sarah to be received as guests. By their hospitality, Abraham and Sarah received a message of hope and life.

Bless us and our hospitality. May our guests be a blessing to us and reveal your presence to us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Closing Blessing

(Family members extend their hands in blessing over the guests.)

O wondrous God, you are never far away. Again and again, you reveal your presence among us. Look with favor on our guests, who during their stay with us have opened our eyes to the mystery of your love and grace. Like our ancestors in the bible, we have received these guests through the fellowship of table: food, drink stories and sharing.

Through them we have participated in the companionship which mirrors the relationship between you and your people. As Abraham and Sarah were visited by your angels, we too have felt your presence through our guests.

Bless these holy pilgrims with safety in their travels, wonderful adventures in your good world, warm welcome from all they meet and a happy return home when that time comes. May all they touch witness the wonder of your presence.

Bless us, O Lord of Hosts, for you became a guest to reveal the truth of your faithful love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.