

# Protection

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## The Experience

### Ceremonies: Protection

This ceremony may be carried out for an individual or a group.

*Everyone is standing. The Officiant and the Assistant are facing the children, who are surrounded by the other participants.*

**Assistant:** The purpose of this ceremony is to give children participation in our community.

Since ancient times, children have been the focus of ceremonies such as namings and baptisms. Through these ceremonies people have recognized a change of status, in stage of life.

There are today and have long been civil formalities that record the date and place of birth and other information. However, the spiritual transcendence that accompanies a ceremony of this kind has nothing to do with the cold formalities of written documents. Rather, it flows from the joy of parents, family, and friends when children are publicly introduced to the community.

This is a ceremony through which the status of children changes as they become participants in a community that makes a commitment to be responsible for them should unfortunate events leave them unprotected.

This ceremony requests protection for this child (these children), and the community welcomes them as new sons and daughters.

*Following a brief pause, the Officiant addresses those present in a warm tone.*

**Officiant:** We ask protection for this child (these children).

**Assistant:** We welcome them with joy, and commit ourselves to their protection.

**Officiant:** We extend our best wishes... Peace and joy for all!

*The Officiant gently lays a hand on the head of each child, kissing each one on the forehead.*