Children Leaving Home  
In rural communities children often leave home for boarding school at a relatively young age. The parents and the community are diminished by the loss. Children also leave home for trips, university, and to move  
somewhere else for employment, marriage etc. This ritual is a model which could be adapted for use in the family, parish or community.

**Leader:** Welcomes and says a few words about who is going and why, and the reality that the person/s will be greatly missed.

(...Name...) we have come together today because we are sad that you are leaving.  
We will miss your presence in our lives and in the life of the community.  
We give thanks to God for who you are,  
And for the opportunity you have to travel and to learn.  
We pray for your safety, your good health and for a remembering heart  
That knows that we love you, we miss you, and that we are here if you need us.

Invitation to all present to extend their hands in blessing or to place a hand on the shoulder of the one leaving.

**PRAYER OF BLESSING**

Blessed are you God of all our journeys,  
Who walked our way in Jesus,  
Be with N.  
As he/she prepares to set off for N. (place)  
And spread before him/her a path that is safe,  
Happy and full of adventures.  
May he/she have room in his/her luggage  
For memories of those who love him/her  
And who await his/her return;  
For wonder at the many new things he/she will see and learn;  
And joy in the company of many friends.

**Presentation**

Some small and meaningful gift is presented to the one leaving, with a card or letter signed by all the family and friends etc.

(...Name...) as you prepare to leave we want to give you this gift, to remind you of us, so that you will never forget how important you are to us.

**Final Prayer**

God of all who travel,  
We place (...Name...) into your hands confident that you will keep him/her from all harm and bring him/her safely back to us.  
We ask your blessing to come on him/her and remain on him/her today and forever. Amen