A New Year full of Hope

Items Needed
A cloth, large candle, matches and a taper
Twelve candles (nightlight) to represent each month of the New Year.
‘Welcome to the New Year’ printed on cardboard.
As each month is named a corresponding candle is lit.
A refrain could be sung between every three - four months mentioned.

Sacred Space
Create a Sacred Space in the centre using the cloth and the large candle. Arrange the 12 little candles in a circle around the centre candle. Place ‘Welcome’ in the Sacred Space.

Introduction:
We welcome the New Year. We take this time to pray God’s blessing on the New Year. We think about what we hope for in the year ahead. We think about our promises, our resolutions that we want to make…PAUSE

Ceremony of Lighting Candles
As we bring the light to this candle (light the large candle in the Sacred Space) we bring the light of Christ to this time of prayer. As we journey through the year it is our prayer that Jesus will accompany us along the way and that we will always be aware of his presence with us.

Prayer:
Each day of my life is a gift from God. Each new day is special and precious. Each day is arranged by God for me. Each day I offer a gift to God by the way I live my life. I offer you God, my play, my joys, my prayer, my study, my goodness, my love…

Ceremony of Lighting Candles to welcome each month of the New Year:
To each prayer the response is: Be with us, Lord, we pray.

January is the time of new beginnings and hope, the time of harsh weather - frost and snow.
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.
In February, time to celebrate the feasts of St. Brigid, St. Blaise and St. Valentine...time of spring and new growth, time when crocuses and daffodils begin to peep!
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.

In March time to remember St. Patrick and St. Joseph. Time of nest building and daffodils
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.

In April, we celebrate Easter, time of Resurrection, time of eternal life... time of brighter days, bunny rabbits and lambs and time for Easter eggs - time to celebrate new life, joy and hope.
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.

In May, time to celebrate Mary’s month, time to sing hymns to Mary…time of blossoms and bluebells.
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.

In June, time to remember those sitting examinations; time to enjoy school tours, long bright evenings and sunshine.
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.

In July, time to enjoy our holidays, time for trips to the seaside, time to enjoy ice-cream, picnics and going to summer camp.
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.

In August, time for harvesting, cutting corn, saving hay and making silage. Time to enjoy our holidays
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.

September, time to return to school and move into a new class, time to learn new things, time to be with our friends again. It’s the time to pick blackberries and enjoy the changing colours of the leaves.
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.

October, time to remember the Rosary, the falling autumn leaves and Halloween. Time for fun and feasting!
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.

November, time of All Saints and time to remember those who have died. It’s a time to enjoy the warmth of the fireside.
Response: Be with us, Lord, we pray.
**December:** time to celebrate the birth of Jesus; time for family, gift-giving, carol singing, Santa Claus, Christmas trees and cribs. It is time to place candles on the windows to welcome Jesus to our home.

*Response:* *Be with us, Lord, we pray*

**Prayer:**
Dear Lord,
May we, each day of this New Year,
Walk gently with you through the world, and know its beauty.

**All:** Amen.

**Hymn:**