

KNIGHT TEMPLAR MEMORIAL SERVICE

Prepared by the Committee on Religious Activities of the Grand Encampment and effective the 27th day of May, 1965, A.O. 847, by General Order No. 7 of the Most Eminent Grand Master.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

(1) Every Knight Templar who was in regular standing at the time of his death is entitled to be buried with the funeral honors of Knighthood. An unaffiliated Knight Templar is not entitled to such honors but a Commandery may grant them to him without breach of Knightly duty.

(2) Upon notice of the death of a Sir Knight entitled to funeral honors and upon his previous request or the request of his family, it is the duty of the Commander to convene his Commandery for the purpose of attending the ceremonies.

(3) The Sir Knights will wear the Templar Dress Uniform, their sword hilts being suitably draped in mourning. In inclement weather the Templar Fatigue Uniform, with or without swords, may be worn and uncovering may be omitted. If the Standard Guard be present with the Colors the latter shall be furled and draped in mourning. .

(4) A small Templar Cross should be placed on the casket. The chapeau and sword, in scabbard, and, if the frater was an officer, his jewel trimmed with crepe shall be placed there.

(5) To receive and escort the remains to the place designated for the service the Commandery will march in the usual order of parades, preferably in charge of the Captain General with the Commander and Staff, including the Prelate, wearing his Robes of Office, and the Honor Guard, marching at the head. On arrival the line will be formed opposite and facing the hearse. The Commander will pass to the front into the funeral parlor and report for duty. The Honor Guard (six Sir Knights under command of one of their number) will precede the casket and later march at the side of the hearse. As the casket appears the Captain General will command: 1. *Present*, 2. *SWORDS*. He will then face front and assume the position of "Salute Swords." When the casket has been placed in the hearse, he will resume the "Carry," face about and command: 1. *Carry*, 2. *SWORDS*. He will then form column of threes and proceed to the front of the column, behind the Police escort and musicians if they are present. The Commander and Staff will follow the Commandery and precede the hearse. The Sir Knights will march at "Reverse Swords" and the Commander and Staff at "Secure Swords."

(6) As the procession arrives at the place designated for the service, the Commandery will resume "Carry Swords," form a line as before, facing the place where the hearse will be halted, and execute the "Present Swords" as the casket is being removed and placed upon the carriage. They will then "Return Swords" and march in a column of files into the Chapel, Asylum or burial place, uncovering at the door if it is a Church and remaining so while within the Church, preferably remaining at the south side of the bier and retaining their formation so as to be able to leave in the same formation. The Commander and Staff, who have followed the column, will take position at the head of the bier or in the East, and the Wardens at the foot of the bier.

The casket is brought in and placed upon the bier, the Guard of Honor, at "Carry Swords," being on either side. The family and friends are seated on the north side of the bier. When all is in readiness the Honor Guard will, upon command, form the arch of steel over the casket.

(7) No fixed rules are possible, as changing conditions are the governing factors. If the service is to be wholly at the cemetery, the "bier" will become the "grave." No provisions are made for seating the participants in this Ceremony, but this can be done by the Captain General, in which event he will bring the Commandery to "Attention" before the reading of Scripture lessons or Prayer.

(8) Preferably the larger part of the funeral is rendered at a funeral parlor, at a church or at some place of public assembly, but the entire rites may be given at the grave.

The service will be conducted according to the following ritual:

RITUAL

COMMANDER: We are gathered here in Christian sympathy to pay our last tribute of love and affection to the memory of Sir Knight ____ Knighted in Commandery No. ____

Sir Knight (use first name) knew, as do all Sir Knights, that in the solemn ceremonies of our Christian Order, we have often been reminded of the truth that we are born to die. The earthly temple of our beloved Sir Knight lies before us, and the light of the eye and his expressions of fraternal greeting have ceased for us on this earth. His sword, vowed to be drawn only in the cause of truth, justice and liberty, reposes in its scabbard, and our arms can no more shield or protect him. But as he rests in sleep and we bow our heads in sympathetic sorrow with those whose heart-ties have been thus broken; let us like the martyrs of old, proclaim with jubilation our triumphant faith. Christ's resurrection is not a fantasy or a dream, it is a reality! It is meet at such a time as this that we should hear again the gracious words of comfort, consolation and hope found in God's Sacred Revelation. Let us be reverently attentive while the Prelate reads us a lesson from the Holy Scriptures.

CAPTAIN GENERAL OR COMMANDER: 1, *Un*, 2. *COVER*.

PRELATE: "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth or the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Saint Paul testified: "And who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God; and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

PRELATE: let us pray.

Almighty God, our loving Heavenly Father, we humbly lift our hearts to Thee. Remember in loving mercy these bereaved ones now before Thee. Be Thou at this hour the comforting Father of all who mourn. Administer unto them the consolation they so sorely need. Cause us to look above *this* scene of mortality to the life which lies in Thy immortality. lead us, by Thy grace and spirit, to seek those things which make for our everlasting peace, and fix our thoughts more devotedly on Thee, the only sure refuge in time of need; and at last when our earthly pilgrimage shall have ended, "when the silver cord shall be loosed, and the golden bowl be broken," wilt Thou O Father, be indeed Immanuel -God with us. May the lamp of Thy love dispel the gloom of the dark valley, and may we be enabled by our faith in Thy Son to gain admission into the blessed temple above. We pray in His name. Amen.

CAPTAIN GENERAL OR COMMANDER: 1. *Re*, 2. *COVER*.

(The Junior Warden hands the sword to the Commander.)

COMMANDER: Our departed Sir Knight was taught that the sword, in the hands of a true and courteous Knight, was endowed with three excellent qualities; its hilt with justice impartial; its blade with fortitude undaunted and its point with mercy unrestrained. He could never grasp it without being reminded of the attributes it symbolized, and to these attributes with their deep significance we renew our pledge. An inspired and heartening hope leads us to the comforting belief that he met the trying hour with fortitude undaunted, and waking in the dawn of a new day has received justice, tempered with mercy unrestrained, which is the glorious attribute of the Son of God, and entering through the gates into the City, has been admitted to the blessed companionship of just men, made perfect in the realms of light and life eternal.

(The Commander returns the sword to the Junior Warden who replaces it in its scabbard. The Commander then hands the Cross to the Prelate.)

PRELATE: The Cross, that emblem so beloved by the Christian World, is beautifully described by these words:

"In the Cross of Christ I glory, Towering o'er the wrecks of time. All the light of sacred story, Gathers round its head sublime."

This symbol of the Christian's hope and trust, we again place upon the breast of our Sir Knight. Handed down to us through the ages, it will always remain the symbol of our faith and the mark of a Christian Knight. It calls to mind Gethsemane and Golgotha, but as Christian Knights we look at the Cross of our Lord through the open tomb. The resurrection of Jesus Christ gives us a triumphant Cross. The Apostle Paul knew the Cross only from the resurrection side. If this inspired Apostle glorified in its truth, so ought we to rejoice in it as a conquering symbol, that death has been vanquished. May this hope expressed by the Cross have been the anchor to the soul of our Sir Knight, the token to admit him to the peaceful haven, where the wicked cease

from troubling and the weary are at rest.

To his mourning friends and loved ones who are most heart-stricken by the loss they have sustained, we tender our sincere sympathy. May your faith in our Heavenly Father bring you peace and hope. He, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb, looks down with infinite compassion upon these bereaved ones in their hour of desolation, and the same benevolent Savior who wept over the grave at Bethany, will enfold within the arms of His bounteous love all those who put their trust in Him. We are aware that man's life on earth, at its longest, is but a footprint upon the sands of time. In his anguish, Job asked a question that is as old as death itself: "If a man die, shall he live again?" It is a question that is found in every sob of sorrow. It is a question that is really a prayer.

Into the ancient world with its questions came Christ's resurrection, declaring that life is mightier than death, and love can never lose its own. "Christ appeared in the splendor of the stars at Christmas and reappeared in the beauty of the lilies of Easter that we might know the truth of everlasting life." Therefore, in answer to Job's question: "If a man die, shall he live again?" the great Captain of our Salvation answers: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Before our Lord entered into the tomb, all the footprints of humanity pointed toward the grave. But Christ, the great Savior of men, set His face in the other direction, away from the tomb, and now those who are His shall follow Him.

Forasmuch as the spirit of our departed Sir Knight has entered into the life immortal, we remember his Knightly qualities and commend his spirit unto God. We can confidently leave him in the hands of an Eternal Father who has done all things well. Delivered from the limitations of this life, his spirit lives and abides in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ; whose life is the judgment of our works and whose resurrection is the pledge of our immortality, Sir Knight ____ farewell, and may the sunshine of Heaven beam bright on thy waking.

PRELATE: Let us pray.

(Pause and give the Commander time to order "Uncover. ")

Almighty God, Thou whose mercies cannot be numbered, accept our prayers on behalf of Thy servant departed, and fulfill his life in the land of light and joy, and in the fellowship of Thy Saints, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Hear us as we unite in the prayer of our Lord.

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

"Now the laborer's task is o'er,
Now the battle day is past.
Now upon the farther shore,
Lands the voyager at last."

"There the tears of earth are dried,
There its hidden things are clear.
There the work of life is tried,
By a juster judge than here."

"Father, in Thy Gracious keeping,
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping."

"The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace, both now and evermore. Amen."

(NOTE: This Memorial Service may be used when the regular Funeral Service is not used, and is to be conducted at the funeral home on the evening before the funeral)