

FUNERAL SERVICE

OVER ASHES OF A CREMATED BROTHER

Place urn containing ashes upon a draped table, floral Square and Compasses on one end, Brother's apron upon the other end.

Lodge officers form in V shape facing audience, Master at apex, Wardens at his right and left, Bible Bearer at one end of formation, Chaplain at other end.

MASTER: From time immemorial it has been a custom of the Society of Free and Accepted Masons, on proper request, to perform the last rites over the remains of a departed Brother.

In conformity with this ancient usage, and in accord with our loving duty to our brother, we are assembled here as Masons to offer tribute of our affection and to testify before the world our faith in the Almighty Father and His beneficent goodness to *us*, His children.

With becoming reverence, then, let us supplicate the Divine Grace to insure the favor of that Eternal Being whose goodness and power know no bounds; that on the arrival of the momentous hour when the fading taper of human life shall faintly glimmer in the socket of existence, our faith may draw aside the sable curtain, and our hope may sustain and cheer the departing spirit.

PRAYER

CHAPLAIN: Almighty and Eternal God--in Whom we live and move and have our being, we beseech Thee to be present with us in this hour and during' ail the days of our earthly life; lead us by the hand of love; point out to us the pathway of duty. Pour out Thy continual blessing upon the relatives and friends of our departed brother. Lead them to know that he is waiting to greet them in a world where light and bliss are eternal. Grant us Thy divine assurance, oh! most merciful God, to redeem our mis-spent time, and, in the important duties which Thou hast assigned us in the erection of our spiritual temple, give us wisdom to direct us, strength to support us and the beauty of holiness to adorn our labors and render them acceptable in Thy sight, so that, when our labors here on earth are ended, we may be with Thee amidst the radiant splendor of eternal truth. Amen!

RESPONSE: So mote it be.

MASTER: The earthly remains of our brother have been committed to the flames; but his spirit has winged its flight to that blissful Lodge which will remain open during the endless ages of eternity. In that Heavenly Sanctuary, the Mystic Light, unmingled with darkness, will reign unbroken and perpetual; and there, amid the sun-beam-smiles of Immutable Love, under the benignant bend of the All-Seeing Eye, by the Infinite Grace of the Almighty Father, we shall meet again.

LAMBSKIN APRON

MASTER (*holding up apron, unfolded*): The Lambskin, or white leather apron, is an emblem of innocence, and the badge of a Mason. Its pure and spotless surface is an ever-present reminder of that purity of life so essentially necessary to gaining admission into the Celestial Lodge above.

This emblem I now place upon the ashes of our brother, as a symbol of his labors in our Craft, and as a token of our brotherhood with him and our kindred sonship with the Father. (***Drops apron, by three distinct pauses, upon the urn.***) Thy day of toil on earth, my brother, is over. Thou hast entered upon a greater field of labor and love.

THE SPRIG OF ACACIA

MASTER (*holding up sprig*): The Evergreen, which once marked the temporary resting-place of one illustrious in Masonic legend, is an emblem of our faith in the immortality of the soul. By it we are reminded that we have an imperishable, immortal spirit, which survives this death, and which will never, never, *never* die. By it we are admonished that we, too, like our Brother, whose ashes now lie before us, shall soon be clothed in the habiliments of death; yet, through the loving kindness of the Supreme Grand Master, we may confidently hope that our souls will hereafter flourish in eternal spring.

FUNERAL GRAND HONORS

His Spirit hath ascended on high,
We commit his ashes to the—
And cherish his memory forever.

AT PLACE OF FINAL COMMITMENT

MASTER: Reverently we commit the ashes of our brother to---. Though our brother has passed beyond our mortal view, yet we can trustingly leave him in the hands of a beneficent Being, who doeth all things well, who is glorious in His holiness, wondrous in His power, and boundless in His goodness 'and love.

May we, my brother, whom you have left behind, go forth with a firm resolution to cultivate the spirit of Truth and Brotherly Love; those virtues which, when subjected to the chastening fires of Time, alone remain, unconsumed, in all their strength and beauty!

With firm faith and reliance in the Supreme Grand Master of the Universe, we know that we shall meet once more in realms beyond the skies. Until then, dear friend and brother, until then, farewell!

BENEDICTION

CHAPLAIN: The Lord bless us, and keep us: The Lord make His face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us: The Lord lift upon us the light of His countenance, and give us peace. Amen.

RESPONSE: So mote it be.