

Ritual for Funeral Service

Theta Gamma Fraternity



Order of Services

- Hymn- Nearer, My God, To Thee
Reading- Poem "There Is No Death"
Reading- Selected Verses from the Scriptures
Prayer- The Theta Gamma Service Prayer

Each member present will then step in turn to the casket and place in (or on) it a white carnation. This act performed, he will return to his place, and remain standing. After all the members have thus taken part, they will march by twos from the room.

The Theta Gamma Funeral Service should be held at some time preceding the regular funeral service. Often it may be possible to have the Brothers act as the pallbearers in the regular service.

Whenever possible, the Theta Gamma Funeral Service shall be conducted by a past or active Chaplain of either one of the Chapters or of the Grand Council. Otherwise, any officer may conduct it, or any Brother selected by those present at the time.

“There Is No Death”

There is no Death! The stars go down
To rise upon some other shore,
And bright in Heavens jeweled crown
They shine for evermore.

There is no Death! The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain or mellow fruit
Or rainbow tinted flowers.

The granite rocks disorganize
To feed the hungry moss they bear;
The forest leaves drink daily life
From out of the viewless air.

There is no Death! The leaves may fall,
The flowers may fade and pass away-
They only wait, through wintry hours,
The coming of the May.

There is no Death! An angel form
Walks o'er the earth with silent tread;
He bears our best loved things away,
And then we call them “dead”.

He leaves our hearts all desolate-
He plucks our fairest, sweetest flowers;
Transplanted into bliss, they now
Adorn immortal bowers.

The bird-like voice, whose joyous tones
Made glad this scene of sin and strife,
Sings now an everlasting song,
Amid the tree of life.

Wherever he sees a smile too bright,
Or soul too pure for taint of vice,
He bears it to that world of light,
To dwell in Paradise.

Born into that undying life,
They leave us but to come again;
With joy we welcome them-the same
Except in sin and pain.

And ever near us, though unseen,
The dear immortal spirits tread;
For all the boundless universe
Is life- There are no dead!

(John Luckey McCreery)

Prayer

Almighty and ever-living God, Thou who givest us life, and hope, and love and hast banded us together in the spirit of Brotherhood, we, the living, are here gathered in the bonds of our Theta Gamma, to offer homage to one of our number whom Thou hast seen fit to call Thy own. As thou givest us life, so also dost Thou take that life from us, that we may be brought more close to Thee. We ask Thy blessing, O Father, on the spirit and action of this service that it may humbly reflect our highest regard for this dear Brother, whom Thou hast plucked from our midst.

Look upon his soul with compassion, O God, that Thou mayst find therein his good works among men. The most stalwart and steadfast of us on Earth, dear God, is but a repenting sinner before Thy heavenly throne of justice. As a sapling tree is bent by the strong wind and returns upright again with the calm, so would we, O Father, bend ever to Thy will and yet remain firm and true in Thy way of life on Earth. In life or in death, Thy will always be done.

In the loss of loved ones, faith is put to its highest and noblest test. On the family of this dear Brother, O God, we ask Thy divine comfort and consolation in this supreme hour of sorrow. Be near unto them, we pray Thee, and may they, through their love, see the stars of hope and promise shining from Thy heaven above. May Thy reassurance be as a counsellor and a guide to them in their trouble.

In Thy divine plan, help we who are here gathered, O God, to see our place. Impress us as individuals and as members of Theta Gamma with the responsibilities of our charge on this Earth of life. Perhaps thou hast gathered us together this day, O Father, that Thou mayst quicken within each one of us a greater appreciation of our opportunities in life, a greater desire that Thy will shall be done in all things, a greater passion for service to our fellow man, and, a stronger desire to use our Fraternity as a medium for bringing not only our Brothers within but rather all of those about us more close to Thee. Give us a keener discernment of the best ideals of our Theta Gamma and what they may mean. Broaden our faith and our vision, O God, that we may see in the loss of this dear Brother a means of bringing us closer to Thee. In Thy way of life, we would have our Theta Gamma ever more.

We will not believe our Brother as gone, O God. Truly, Thou art the resurrection and the life; and, he who believeth in Thee, even Tho' he be dead, yet shall he live again with Thee. Our expression is often times weak, O Father, and yet our faith is ever strong. Our Brother is not dead. He is but asleep with Thee. In Thy care, O God, we place him. Grant him, we pray Thee, peace and happiness in "the live ahead". In Thy name and Thine alone do we ask all of these blessings.

Amen

Readings from the Scriptures

1 Corinthians 15:45-52

And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, at the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Revelations 20:12

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

1 Corinthians 15:54-55,57

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?
But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 25:4,8

For thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones shall be brought low.
He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it.

John 14:1-4,6,27

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. And whither I go you know, and the way ye know. Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, the life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
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.