

## **Graveside Service For Departed Members of the Military Order of Stars & Bars**

Prior to the beginning of the service it is desirable that the coffin be covered with the Confederate Battle Flag. If at all possible, a uniformed firing party of at least three uniformed soldiers will be present and a bugler. All the members will assemble at a short distance from the grave so that they may approach in military step preceded by a flag of the Confederacy (this should not be the battle flag, which on this occasion is reserved for the coffin of the deceased compatriot - one of the versions of the national flag should be used). When all have arrived at the graveside, the Commander will take his place at the head of the casket and the Chaplain at the foot, and the service will commence:

**COMMANDER:** We are here today to pay the last tribute of friendship in the presence of the honored dead. We are to commit to the grave the body of a compatriot whose life-aside from his other ties of friendship and sociability was drawn very close to our lives by a bond of love, which is formed amidst a common dedication to that great heritage and responsibility which is ours as descendants of the Officer Corps and leaders of the Confederate States of America.

**CHAPLAIN:** "We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us what work thou didst in their days, in the time of old. Surely I will never forget any of their works. Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. We call upon you, O Lord, in the day of trouble as Thou sayest, 'I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify me.' Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Amen."

**LT. COMMANDER:** He was an honored member of our great Order, true and tried, a gallant spirit who by his steadfastness held up the immortality of Southern Arms. He fought a good fight and has left a record of which we, his surviving compatriots, are proud, and which is a heritage of glory to his family and their descendants for all time to come. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

**COMMANDER:** Once more the bugle call has sounded and another compatriot, obedient to the signal, has laid down in his last sleep. No more shall the sound of martial music, the measured tramp of marching legions, the crash of arms, or the roar of conflict arouse in him the warrior's resolve "To do, or die." His battle of life has been fought, he has been relieved from his post of duty in our great Military Order of the Stars & Bars, and he has crossed over the river to rest under the shade of the trees. Let us leave him to his rest, and as the earth will hide him from our sight forever, let us bury in oblivion any recollection of his human frailties, commemorating only the virtues of one who was our friend. Yet a little while, and we, too, shall fold our hands in peaceful repose, from which there shall be no awakening until the last great Reveille shall rouse the slumbering millions to answer to their names before the great Captain of the Universe.

**LT. COMMANDER:** Compatriots, let us engage in the battle of Life with an unfaltering resolve to do our duty. Let no vicissitudes, however trying, no pleasures, however alluring, drive or tempt us to abandon our post; and when at last we approach the Sentinel that keeps eternal guard over the Great Golden Gate, let us be prepared with the countersign that will admit us to the company of those who have been tried and not found wanting, those choice spirits who, holding their conscience unmixed with blame, have been in all conditions true to themselves, to their country, and to their God.

**CHAPLAIN:** O God, Creator of the universe and Commander of the hosts of heaven, to thy care we commit the spirit of our departed Compatriot. While by day the sun makes its round, and by night the stars keep watch and ward over this bivouac of our dead. We commit his body to the earth. Dust to dust, ashes to ashes in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection

**of the dead through Our Lord Jesus Christ. May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercies of Christ rest in peace. Amen.**

At the conclusion of the prayer the firing party will fire three volleys. The bugler will then play taps. The Commander and Lt. Commander, or other appointed members of the Order, will fold the battle flag and present the sacred banner to the widow or other family member designated to receive the same. The members will then withdraw and be dismissed by the Commander. It would be desirable if, at parting, each MOS&B member placed a sprig of evergreen on the coffin as a sign of life everlasting.

NOTE: This program was prepared by MOS&B Chaplain General Fr. Robert G. Carroon, who states that, "This service is designed to either precede or follow the regular burial service at the graveside of the departed member. The wishes of the officiating clergy and the family should determine in what order the Military Order of the Stars and Bars graveside service will be conducted."