

## **K.V. Memorial Service**

*(When it is not possible to hold the Knights of Vartan funeral service, this memorial service may be held. All attending Knights must wear their yokes. It is desirable that as many Knights as possible be present and it is mandatory that the Commander, Lieutenant Commander, Chaplain, and Master of Ceremonies be present. The Knights form a procession headed by the Commander and followed in pairs by his officers and the Knights and file into the room. The Commander stands in the middle with the Lieutenant Commander to his left. The Chaplain stands at the right of the Commander with the Master of Ceremonies to the right of the Chaplain. The rest of the Knights stand to the left and right.[approved at 2021 Avak Tahlij])*

### **COMMANDER:**

We have come here today to offer our final farewell to our departed Brother Knight \_\_\_\_\_ and to pay our respects to his unfading memory. The chilling weight of death presses upon our hearts, fills us with bitterness and grief, and deprives us of balanced reasoning. We endeavor to discover and grasp the meaning of birth and death. And in our effort we arrive at the unsatisfactory conclusion, that birth is the beginning of life, and death, its end. We are dissatisfied by this conclusion. An incomprehensible and unknown power within us tells us with commanding authority that life has no end; it is eternal and infinite like the universe. This is the spiritual life which our Chaplain will explain to us.

### **CHAPLAIN:**

In the ordinary conception of man, life is limited. It begins with birth and ends with death. That is the physical limitation of life. "Earth thou art and to earth shalt thou return." Such an interpretation ignores the soul, which is not matter, but an incomprehensible and supernatural power, without beginning or end. The body, which is ever-changeable matter, is the temple of the soul. The body weakens. Its mechanism wears out through age and illness, and one day, no longer able to contain and express the soul, it dies. It turns to earth whence it was formed, but the soul lives forever. The foundation for understanding this divine plan is faith. Faith in the existence of a supreme being, who is omnipotent and has infinite knowledge, rule and power over his creation; faith in life eternal and in the immortality of the soul.

### **COMMANDER:**

Chaplain, we, the Knights of Vartan, have chosen as the guide of our lives, the principles of the Holy Bible and the symbol of the Cross. Therefore, kindly explain to us the meaning of eternal life as written by divine revelation.

### **CHAPLAIN:**

Blessed are they who believe in the divinity of Christ. His words are God's words, His promises, God's promises. Christ said, "Let not your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house are many mansions. I will go and prepare a place for you. Whosoever believes in me, shall never die," These are promises of eternal life, which inspire the believer with the hope that death is only the end of an earthly and transient life, and after death there remains eternal life, deathless and endless.

**LIEUTENANT COMMANDER:**

When death visits our homes and our circles, we are broken and dismayed; we mourn and weep; we feel the pain of its sting. Our hearts are filled with sorrow, as we feel deprived for the rest of our lives, of the companionship, affection, love and care of the dear one we have lost. Our hope to see him again in eternity seems dim and uncertain. We need an assurance that death is not the end of life as we understand it.

**CHAPLAIN:**

Life has no beginning and no end. It is not an appearance, but an eternal truth. Death alone is appearance, tied up only with matter. Death means the Separation of the Soul from the physical body. Only such an understanding about life and death can comfort our sorrowing heart, lighten our grief and strengthen our will to live.

**COMMANDER:**

Dear Mourners, these theoretical words can neither comfort our hearts, nor drive away our sorrow. It is above the limited human power to welcome death with joy. We all feel its sting and we are terrified by its dark countenance. Yet it is just and useful that we try to grasp the divine meaning of life and death, and make an effort to recognize and accept universal thought that "Death perceived is immortality." Our loss is great. Therefore, in order to perpetuate the undying memory of our loved one, we must constantly remember his quality of character, his good deeds and his willingness to serve and to sacrifice. We must try to make worthwhile the brief span of life, which God has granted unto us upon this earth, ever remembering the shining truth, that after death our good deeds alone remain. May God illuminate the soul of our departed Brother.

**KNIGHTS IN UNISON:**

Amen.

**COMMANDER:**

Master of Ceremonies

**Commander**

Master of Ceremonies, as brother Knights we wear the Tri-color yoke. Please explain the colors that we wear and what they represent to us.

**Master of Ceremonies**

The colors of our yoke are red, white and green.

The red represents the blood that has been spilled for our Armenian Faith.

The white represents our Hope in the resurrection and the green our spirit of service as brother Knights.

**Commander**

And it is the color white, our hope in the resurrection that comforts us today.

**COMMANDER:**

Dear Brother, I feel the presence of your spirit among us. We will ever respect your memory, and endeavor to remain faithful to the oath of service as Knights of Vartan, to which your dedication was sincere and unselfish. May God deem you worthy of his crown of glory and may he fill the hearts of those who mourn you with His merciful love and comfort. Amen.

**KNIGHTS IN UNISON:**

Blessed be the memory of our Brother.

**(OPTIONAL)**

*("i Verin Yerusaghem" may be sung at this point and the service closed with the "Hayr Mer" in Armenian. However, wherever it is not possible to sing "i Verin Yerusaghem", the following prayer should be substituted.)*

**CHAPLAIN:**

We thank You, O Gracious Father, for the life of Your servant whom we loved, and who has now gone before us into Your presence. We praise You for all that was good, for all that was kind, and for all that was loving in his life, for the spirit of helpfulness, and for the gift of friendship, we praise and thank You, O Lord. Help us to ever think of him as going before us into Life and Light, where we are all to follow.

In this Christian faith, our Father, may we return to our daily lives with courage and quiet trust, knowing that we remain forever in Your fatherly care. Into Your hands we commit our lives and all whom we have loved, this day and forever more. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**CHAPLAIN AND KNIGHTS IN UNISON:**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done on 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.

*(After singing of the "Hayr Mer" in Armenian or the reciting of the "Lord's Prayer" in English, the Commander approaches the casket and places a previously prepared green bough or flower on the casket. All of the Knights pay their respects by placing a sprig of green. The Commander, followed by the Knights, express their sympathy to the bereaved family and then take their leave.)*