

A simple reflection on the day of a funeral you can't attend

Life is a journey on many different roads; sometimes we lift our faces to the sun; but then there are the hard journeys through pathways of pain and fears in dark places.

Do not be afraid to name the darkness.

Before you find a place to sit quietly, you might like to find a photograph of the person who has died, write down some special memories, or play a special piece of music that connects you with the person you are remembering today. Think about those who are at the funeral

You might like to light a candle.

None of us knows the whole truth about what lies beyond death. Some believe that as we journey between life and death, we are safe in the hands of an infinitely gracious God. Some believe that death invites us into a new awareness of God, and to know in truth whether what we have valued in ourselves has eternal value. Some believe that the greatest endeavour of human life is to be found in the depths of loving and being loved by another.

We remember *N* believing that all human life is valuable, that the truth and integrity and hopefulness which resides in each life, lives on.

We know that *N*'s life was lived in its uniqueness with us. That the gifts and graces which they offered are never lost to us. All that they brought to us in their life and relationships lies now within our own lives and goes with us into the future.

Now give thanks for their life and seek strength for yourself and those who grieve.



Reflect on your memories:

- What stands out in your memory about *N*?
- What will you always remember about them?
- What things did you learn through their life and death?

In our farewell, part of our grief may be regret for things done or left undone, words said, or never said, or moments that never happened. This is the time to lay aside all those regrets.

For those memories that bring joy, give thanks.

For those that bring pain or sorrow, ask for peace.

You might want to say the Lord's Prayer:

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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass
against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the
kingdom, the power and the glory, for
ever and ever.
Amen

You might want to read one of these poems

Not how did they die but how did they live?

Not how did they die but how did
they live? Not what did they gain,
but what did they give?
These are the units to measure the
worth of one person, regardless of
birth.

Not what was their church, nor what
was their creed? But had they
befriended those really in need?
Were they ever ready with words of
good cheer, To bring back a smile,
to banish a tear?

Not what did the sketch in the
newspaper say,
But how many were sorry when
they passed away?

Anonymous

Gone from my sight

I am standing upon the seashore.
A ship at my side spreads her white
sails to the morning breeze and starts
for the blue ocean.

She is an object of beauty and strength.
I stand and watch her until at length
she hangs like a speck of white cloud
just where the sea and sky come
to mingle with each other.

Then, someone at my side says:
'There, she is gone!'

'Gone where?'
Gone from my sight. That is all.
She is just as large in mast and hull
and spar as she was when she left my side
and she is just as able to bear her
load of living freight to her destined port.
Her diminished size is in me, not in her.

And just at that moment when someone
at my side says, 'There, she is gone!'
there are other eyes watching her coming,
and other voices ready to take up the glad
shout:
'Here she comes!'
And that is dying.

Henry Van Dyk

We are not alone

We are the people who heal each other, who grow strong together, who
name the truth, who know what it means to live in community.

**If you need support you can talk to the Chaplain at your home or scheme or call the
Pastoral Support line on 07545 652 393 and an MHA Chaplain will call you back
within 24 hours.**