

The Funeral Rites

Rite of Banishing for *N*

HP/s welcomes all present and says:

It is a hard thing to die.

**Struggle and violence are often a part of death,
and even the most peaceful of deaths is difficult.**

The personality is rent asunder. The second death looms.

**These things may bring reasonable fears to *N* and to his/her community.
In this time and place, to give the loving care that we would minister to *N*,
we must banish them, establishing this moment as one of peace and safety.**

*Tokens of fear, violence, etc are thrown onto the floor.
The HP/s or officer crushes them with their heel, as all say:*

For *N*, we hurl fear and violence beneath our feet.

We tread upon them. We break their strength.

We crush their threat. We make them small.

Their power is destroyed in the East.

Their power is destroyed in the South.

Their power is destroyed in the West.

Their power is destroyed in the North.

The HP/s or officer sweeps the crushed tokens away, as all say:

We sweep all vestiges of fear from our presence.

We cast out all taint of struggle.

This place is purged of all evil

It is cleansed in the East.

It is cleansed in the South.

It is cleansed in the West.

It is cleansed in the North.

The HP/s or officer asperges the space, concluding with:

I purify with water.

The HP/s or officer censens the space, concluding with:

I consecrate with fire.

Rite of Summoning *N*

*HP/s says N's full names, worldly and magical, if appropriate, and then lists N's associations, titles,
and honors, concluding with:*

We call you here that you may be prepared for your journey ahead.

We call you here, that your spirit may be attracted, that you may be guided.

HP/s or officer says:

**You are called back into the present.
Your earthly hours are totaled,
Your mundane tasks are finished.
The material aspect of this side is a preoccupation that concerns you no longer.
All the struggle, all the sorrow, all the separation – finished.
You have finished with the world and with everyday talk,
for our last words will be in the language of the mysteries.**

Rite of Purification of *N*

*HP/s asperges the body or image of *N* with fresh and salt water, as all say:*

**You are washed in the pure water of the heavens.
You are cleansed in the pure water of the seas.
The dust of your mortal life is washed from you.
The errors of your mortal life are cleansed from you.
For what ill you have done, we forgive you.
For what good you have not done, we forgive you.
O *N*, be at peace, for you are pure before us.**

*HP/s censes the image of *N*, as all say:*

**Incense washes over you.
You are purified by means of its scent.
The perfumes of the Gods embrace you.
All fault is driven from you.
You absorb the essence of Holiness.
O *N*, be at peace, for you are sanctified before us.**

Rite of Acceptance of *N*

*All face *N* and say:*

***N*, we ask that you hear us and be at peace.
You shall not be forgotten.
We will re-member you and the good you have done.
Your position and legacy will not be neglected.
We will carry forth your work.
You will be honored among us.
You remain a vital part of our community.**

**In turn, we ask a boon of you.
May you intercede for us with the Spirits.
May you watch over us and guard us.
May you bless us and our generations.**

So mote it be.

Rite of Giving Light to *N*

*The HP/s lights a candle (from conveniently placed candles near the point where participants would approach the image of *N*) and places it in rear of the holder in front of the image, saying:*

**We come in the Power of the Light.
We come in the Light of Wisdom.
We come in the Mercy of the Light
The Light has healing in Its Wings.
N, as the Light can manifest in darkness,
so by these rites shall the Light be rekindled within you.**

Participants queue, light candles, and place them in the holder (back to front) repeating:

**For your spirit *N*, we give this light to you.
May it burn within you, illuminating your way.
May you shine as a Blessed One, forever.**

When all have lit and placed candles, ring three bells. All say together:

**The light has blazed forth within you *N*
and driven away the darkness.
The light has entered into and permeated your being.
You are in the infinite light and the infinite light is in you.
You are surrounded by the white brilliance of the Divine Spirit.
Nothing but good can come to you.
Nothing but good shall go from you.
For you live: a Being of Light!**

Rite of Calling the Mighty Dead for *N*

The HP/s says:

**In this moment, it as if we are standing upon the seashore.
A ship at our side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze,
and starts for the blue ocean.
She is an object of beauty and strength, and we stand and watch her
until at length she hangs like a speck of white cloud,
just where the sea and sky come down to mingle with each other.
Then someone says - 'There, she's gone.'
Gone where? Gone from our sight, that is all.
She is just as large in mast and hull and spar
as she was when she left, and just as able to carry
her load of living freight to the place of destination.
Her diminished size is in us, not in her,
And just at the moment when someone says:
'There, she's gone.' there are other eyes watching her coming,
And other voices ready to take up the glad shout -
'There! She comes!'**

We call now to those on this distant shore, that they may prepare for *N*'s arrival.

*The HP/s announces the name of *N*'s mother (if deceased). All respond:*

Open the doors of the West, for your son/daughter comes.

*The HP/s announces the name of *N*'s father (if deceased). All respond:*

Make wide the doors of evening, for your son/daughter comes.

*The HP/s announces the names of *N*'s grandmothers, grandfathers (if deceased). After each, all respond:*

Your grand son/daughter comes. Make a way for him/her.

*The HP/s announces the names of *N*'s deceased relatives. After each, all respond:*

One of your blood comes. Make a way for him/her.

*The HP/s announces the name of *N*'s craft elders (if deceased). After each, all respond:*

Mighty One, open your arms for one of us.

When concluded, all invoke:

**Ye Mighty Ones of Old, ancient and honored,
We invoke you. Behold, *N* comes to you.
S/he has been purified.
May s/he be found worthy of your company.
May s/he be exalted among you.
We, your descendents, ask this boon of you.
So mote it be.**

The Rite of Calling to the Mother for *N*

The HP/s says:

**It is the fervent belief of *N* that death is not the end of life,
but the return to Her from Whom all arise.**

All invoke:

**O Thou that was before the Earth was formed:
Rhea, Pan-Gaia, Ge –
O tideless, soundless boundless, bitter sea,
We are Thy people and we call to Thee.
O arching sky above and earth beneath,
Giver of Life and Bringer In of Death,
Persephone, Astarte, Ashtoreth,
We are Thy people and we call to Thee.**

**We feel Your Power as You draw near.
Hear the invoking words, hear and appear –
Hera in heaven, on Earth Persephone,
Diana of the Ways, and Hecate,
Selene of the Moon, Star of the sea,
Isis unveiled, and Rhea, Pan-Gaia, Ge.
We are Thy people and we call to Thee.**

The HP/s says:

**Great Mother, Guardian of the Spirits,
Supernal Majesty Who wears Mystery as a garment,
In Whom are all endings and beginnings,
We humbly beseech Thee to open your realm for *N*.
May the Power of Your Being bring *N* swiftly and surely to You.
May s/he stand before You, and be blessed.
This we pray, in your Holy Names.**

All reply:

So mote it be.

Rite of Closing the Coffin

The HP/s closes the coffin, as someone says:

**Like a tender seed, you are wrapped in a husk,
safely enfolded in the love of your people.
You shall return cradled in your Mother's arms.
And death shall be the last embrace of Her
Who takes the life She gave,
even as a mother, folding her child, says, 'Leave me not again.'**

Rite of Sending *N* Forth

*The HP/s says to *N*:*

***N*, we have given you all that mortals can give,
done all that can be done, in this, your hour.
You have been prepared.
The way has been made open for you.
Now, you must go forth, to enter into the last Mystery.
You must go where we cannot,
to stand face to face before the Gods.**

The HP/s says to the congregants:

**In your mind's eye, see a great door opening in the West.
A living light spills out, like liquid fire, and floods over *N*.**

***N*'s aura glows brighter, merging with this Light,
until all that can be seen is one mass of ethereal flame.**

All say:

**Oh *N*, go forth upon your journey.
Travel in peace. Go forth.
Like a flame flashing throughout eternity,
to your destiny, go forth!**

The HP/s says:

**Take *N* to your breast, great Holiest of Mothers,
this your child, and aid him/her, receive him/her,
forgive him/her.
Blessed is s/he, body of your Body, soul of your Soul.
Tenderly receive him/her, O Mother!
For s/he parts Thy Veil and dies to the birth!**

All say:

**S/he rushes out of the sorrowful, weary wheel.
S/he gains the crown of eternal life.
S/he finds refuge with the Goddess.
Ring nine bells slowly and allow events to transpire.**

The HP/s then says:

**Blessed are they who have been freed from illusion and death.
Blessed are they who have regained the crown of eternal life.
Blessed are they who have found refuge with the Goddess.**

All say:

**O Sky and Earth, O Sovereigns of the Powers Elemental,
O Gods and Goddesses Whom *N* has served,
Deign to bless *N* with Your Abundant Power.
May you make him/her to shine as a star forever,
to the wonder and glory of your Holy Names.**

The HP/s or officer says:

**Let death come when it will, and we shall flee it not.
For how shall they cast us out of the universe?
Wherever we shall go, there will be the sun and the moon
and the stars and vision and communion with the Gods.**

If appropriate, the HP/s says:

Let us celebrate this holy mystery.

Cakes and Wine are blessed and shared.

The HP/s then says:

**Great Mother, Dark Consoler, Ye Mighty Ones of Old,
We thank you for your presence and blessings
And ere Ye depart unto your blessed realms,
We say hail and farewell.**

All respond:

Hail and Farewell!

The HP/s says:

**Happy are we that have seen these rites,
ere we go beneath the Earth.
We know of life's consummation.
We know of its ultimate source.
*Ring three bells.***

HP/s says:

It is finished.

All respond:

So mote it be.