

FUNERALS

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

It's so difficult when you can't go to a funeral, whether for family, friend or neighbour. Many are facing this in the current crisis, so this short reflection has been specially written by a vicar for you to do at home, alone or with those who share your home. You might ask others to take part at the same time from their home.

When this time of social distancing is over, there may well be an opportunity to meet together at a special time of remembering and thankfulness. Your memories now can be part of that experience when the time comes.

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39

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 and pray for them.

[Where it says 'N' in a prayer, just say the name of your person].

You might like to light a candle. Then pray:

Be with us, loving God.

Hear our prayers and comfort us in our loss, and help us to trust in your Son Jesus, whom you raised from the dead.

Strengthen our faith and renew our hope that N and all those we love will share in his resurrection.

Amen.

Read Psalm 23

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.

- 3 He shall refresh my soul and guide me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; you have anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.
- 6 Surely goodness and loving mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.



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, including about God?

Now give thanks to God for their life and ask for strength for yourself and those who grieve.

Dear God,
thank you for N,
and for all that he/she meant to me and to others.

I so wanted to say goodbye.
Help me to know you are there,
holding all my hopes,
holding all those I love, especially N,
and holding me this day too.
Be close to us all this day with your peace and hope.
Amen.

Heavenly Father,
you have not made us for darkness and death,
but for life with you for ever.

Without you we have nothing to hope for;
with you we have nothing to fear.
Speak to us now your words of eternal life.
Lift us to the light and peace of your presence,
and set the glory of your love before us today:
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Now say the Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

[or]

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.

Now pray this prayer, which is used at the end of the funeral service to say goodbye.

God our creator and redeemer,
by your power Christ conquered death
and entered into glory.
Confident of his victory
and claiming his promises,
we entrust N to your mercy
in the name of Jesus our Lord,
who died and is alive
and reigns with you,
now and for ever.
Amen.

To finish you might like to light a candle online at www.churchofengland.org/funeral-candle

Help and support are available for you during this time, and in the future.

Go to www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals for details of how to contact your local church, find help in your bereavement and remembering.