Order of Christian Funerals

Including ANZAC – Veterans Ritual

**Introductory Rites**

If the coffin arrives with the Australian Flag, the flag is removed before the Coffin enters the church. The flag may be placed in an appropriate place at the front of the church until it is needed for the Final Commendation.

Final Commendation

Option A

Words of Remembrance

The presider may introduce the Words of Remembrance. The person moves to the side lectern.

Invitation to Prayer

The presider moves to the coffin.

Presider: Before we go our separate ways, let us take leave of our sister, XXXX. May our farewell express our affection for her; may it ease our sadness and strengthen our hope. One day we shall joyfully greet her again when the love of Christ, which conquers all things, destroys even death itself.

Pause for silent prayer.

Signs of Farewell

Presider: We come now to the final signs by which we farewell our sister XXXX. Would those who placed symbols on XXXX’s coffin come forward and remove them?

The Song of Farewell begins immediately. The symbols are removed. Presider then incenses the coffin, returning to its head ready for the Prayer of Commendation. The song continues throughout this action, ending when Presider is in place.

The Song of Farewell

Presider: Saints of God come to her aid. Come to meet her angels of the Lord

**All: Receive her soul and present her to God the most high.**

Presider: May Christ who called you, take you to Himself;

May Angels lead you to Abraham’s side.

**All: Receive her soul and present her to God the most high.**

Presider: Give her eternal rest, O Lord, and may your light shine on her forever

**All: Receive her soul and present her to God the most high.**

OR

Song of Farewell: This Day In The New Jerusalem James Bessert

Cantor: May the angels welcome you to paradise,

May the martyrs greet you on your way,

May you see the face of the Lord this day,

Alleluia, alleluia.

**All: May the angels welcome you to paradise,**

**May the martyrs greet you on your way,**

**May you see the face of the Lord this day,**

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

Repeated by all as required.

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Prayer of Commendation Please stand.

**Option B: IF A RSL TRIBUTE IS TO BE INCLUDED AT THE CHURCH, THE FOLLOWING PATTERN IS CONSIDERED BEST PRACTICE:**

Words of Remembrance

The presider may introduce the Words of Remembrance. The person moves to the side lectern.

RSL Service of Tribute

The presider stands at the chair and invites those who placed the Christian symbols on the coffin to come forward and remove them, using these or similar words:

Presider: XXXX served his country faithfully. As we prepare to recall and honour his service, would those who placed symbols on XXXX’s coffin come forward and remove them?

The presider remains standing at the chair throughout the following Tribute.

The symbols are removed, and the Australian Flag is placed upon the coffin in preparation for the RSL Service.

When this action is completed, the RSL official moves to the side lectern and leads the RSL Tribute.

The following outline is a guide only.

RSL Officer: Their bodies are buried in peace and their names liveth forevermore.

An RSL Officer moves to the lectern and delivers the RSL eulogy, after which the previous officer continues.

RSL Officer: O Valient Hearts who to your glory come through dust of conflict and through battle flame, tranquil you lie, your knightly virtue proved, your memory hallowed in the land you loved.

Holding a poppy, the officer continues.

The hour has come for rest. This poppy – an emblem of sacrifice, the symbol of a life offered in the service of one’s country – is a link between our comrade and us who remain. We place it here in remembrance.

The president or officer of the sub-branch places his poppy on the coffin, followed by other RSL members in turn saying their own form of farewell or the words ‘O beloved comrade’.

The Officer then continues:

A few moments silence.

The silence is ended with the playing of the Last Post.

The Officer continues:

They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,

we will remember them.

**All: We will remember them.**

RSL Officer: Lest we forget.

**All: Lest we forget.**

Then follows Reveille.

At the conclusion of the RSL Tribute, the RSL official returns to his/her seat, and the Presider moves to the coffin.

Invitation to Prayer

Presider: Before we go our separate ways, let us take leave of our sister, XXXX. May our farewell express our affection for her; may it ease our sadness and strengthen our hope. One day we shall joyfully greet her again when the love of Christ, which conquers all things, destroys even death itself.

Pause for silent prayer.

Signs of Farewell

The Song of Farewell begins immediately. The Presider then incenses the coffin, returning to its head ready for the Prayer of Commendation. The song continues throughout this action, ending when Presider is in place.

The Song of Farewell

Presider: Saints of God come to her aid. Come to meet her angels of the Lord

**All: Receive her soul and present her to God the most high.**

Presider: May Christ who called you, take you to Himself;

May Angels lead you to Abraham’s side.

**All: Receive her soul and present her to God the most high.**

Presider: Give her eternal rest, O Lord, and may your light shine on her forever

**All: Receive her soul and present her to God the most high.**

OR

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Cantor: May the angels welcome you to paradise,

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May you see the face of the Lord this day,

Alleluia, alleluia.

**All: May the angels welcome you to paradise,**

**May the martyrs greet you on your way,**

**May you see the face of the Lord this day,**

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

Repeated by all as required.

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Prayer of Commendation Please stand.

Procession to the Place of Committal

Invitation

Presider: In peace, let us take our sister XXXX to her place of rest.

The pall bearers come forward to walk the coffin from the church.

Acknowledgments

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