

List of Common Funeral Readings

Death Is Nothing At All

Henry Scott Holland

Death is nothing at all.
I have only slipped away to the next room.
I am I and you are you.
Whatever we were to each other,
That, we still are.

Call me by my old familiar name.
Speak to me in the easy way
which you always used.
Put no difference into your tone.
Wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.

Laugh as we always laughed
at the little jokes we enjoyed together.
Play, smile, think of me. Pray for me.
Let my name be ever the household word
that it always was.
Let it be spoken without effect.
Without the trace of a shadow on it.

Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same that it ever was.
There is absolute unbroken continuity.

What is death but a negligible accident?
Why should I be out of mind
because I am out of sight?

I am but waiting for you.
For an interval.
Somewhere very near.
Just around the corner.

All is well.

Nothing is past; nothing is lost.
One brief moment and all will be as it was before.
How we shall laugh at the trouble of parting when
we meet again!

Do Not Stand At My Grave And Weep

Mary Elizabeth Frye

Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there. I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow.
I am the diamond glints on snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry;
I am not there. I did not die.

Remember

Christina Rossetti

Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.

Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you plann'd:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.

Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

Irish Blessing

Traditional

May the roads rise up to meet you,
May the wind be always at you back,
May the sunshine be warm upon you face,
May the rains fall soft upon the fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of his hand.

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Desiderata Max Ehrmann

Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and
remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible, without surrender, be on good
terms with all persons.
Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to
others,
even to the dull and ignorant; they too have their
story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are
vexations to the spirit.
If you compare yourself with others, you may
become vain and bitter,
for always there will be greater and lesser persons
than yourself.
Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.

Keep interested in your own career, however
humble; it is a real possession in the changing
fortunes of time.
Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the
world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is;
many persons strive for high ideals,
and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love;
for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it
is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully
surrendering the things of youth.
Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden
misfortune.
But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with
yourself.
You are a child of the universe no less than the
trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here. And whether or not it
is clear to you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you
conceive Him to be.
And whatever your labours and aspirations, in the
noisy confusion of life,
keep peace with your soul. With all its sham,
drudgery and broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful. Strive to be
happy.

I Corinthians 13: 1-13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but
have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging
cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and
understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I
have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have
not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if
I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not
love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or
boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist
on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it
does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with
the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things,
hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass
away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for
knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part
and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect
comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a
child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I
reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave
up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly,
but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I
shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but
the greatest of these is love.

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Miss Me - But Let Me Go Christina Rossetti

When I come to the end of the road
And the sun has set for me
I want no rites in a gloom-filled room.
Why cry for a soul set free?

Miss me a little - but not too long
And not with you head bowed low.
Remember the low that we once shared,
Miss me - but let me go.

For this is a journey that we all must take
And each must go alone.
It's all a part of the Master's plan,
A step on the road to home.

When you are lonely and sick of heart
Go to the friends we know
And bury your sorrows in doing good deeds.
Miss me - but let me go!

A Passage From 'Toilers Of The Sea' Victor Hugo

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 the 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.

She Is Gone (He Is Gone) David Harkins

You can shed tears that she is gone
Or you can smile because she has lived
You can close your eyes and pray that she will
come back
Or you can open your eyes and see all that she has
left
Your heart can be empty because you can't see
her
Or you can be full of the love that you shared
You can turn your back on tomorrow and live
yesterday
Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of
yesterday
You can remember her and only that she is gone
Or you can cherish her memory and let it live on
You can cry and close your mind, be empty and
turn your back
Or you can do what she would want: smile, open
your eyes, love and go on.

Cradling Song John Bell

We cannot care for you the way we wanted, or
cradle you or listen to your cry;
but separated as we are by silence, our love will
not die.

We cannot watch you growing into childhood, and
find a new uniqueness every day;
but special as you would have been among us,
forever you still will stay.

So through the mess of anger, grief and tiredness,
through tensions which are not yet reconciled,
we give to God the worship of our sorrow and
you, our dear child.

Lord, in your arms which cradle all creation we
rest and place our baby beyond death
believing that she now, alive in heaven, breathes
with your own breath

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Asleep in Somerset Mabs Holland

Those who sleep in Somerset sleep sweet beneath
the sod
Where legend says, in bygone days, walked Christ
the Son of God
From Pilton-port to Priddy, over Glastonbury Hill
Where the breath of God blew gently
Those who sleep here feel it still

In Somerset, the summer-land where I was born
and bred
When I must die, pray let me lie with the Mendips
for my bed
That I may rest in Glory where the feet of Christ
once trod
And blowing gently o'er me
I too, may feel the breath of God

Turn Again To Life Mary Lee Hall

If I should die and leave you here awhile,
Be not like other, sore undone, who keep
Long vigils by the silent dust, and weep.
For my sake - turn again to life and smile,
Nerving thy heart and trembling hand to do
Something to comfort other hearts than thine.
Complete those dear unfinished tasks of mine
And I, perchance, may therein comfort you.

After Glow Jessica Brown

I'd like the memory of me to be a happy one.
I'd like to leave an after glow of smiles when life is
done.
I'd like to leave an echo, whispering softly down
the ways.
Of happy times and laughing times and bright and
sunny days.
I'd like the tears of those who grieve to dry before
the sun.
Of happy memories that I leave behind when life is
done.

When I Am Old Jenny Joseph

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple
With a red hat that doesn't go, and doesn't suit
me,
And I shall spend my pension
on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals,
and say we've no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I am tired,
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm
bells,
And run my stick along the public railings,
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick the flowers in other people's gardens,
And learn to spit.
You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat,
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go,
Or only bread and pickle for a week,
And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats
and things in boxes.
But now we must have clothes that keep us dry,
And pay our rent and not swear in the street,
And set a good example for the children.
We will have friends to dinner and read the
papers.
But maybe I ought to practice a little now?
So people who know me
are not too shocked and surprised,
When suddenly I am old
and start to wear purple!

Life Goes On Joyce Grenfell

If I should go before the rest of you
Break not a flower
Nor inscribe a stone
Nor when I am gone
Speak in a Sunday voice
But be the usual selves
That I have known

Weep if you must
Parting is hell
But life goes on
So sing as well

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Close The Gate Nancy Kraayenhof

For this one farmer the worries are over, lie down
and rest your head,
Your time has been and struggles enough, put the
tractor in the shed.

Years were not easy, many downright hard, but
your faith in God transcended,
Put away your tools and sleep in peace, the fences
have all been mended.

You raised a fine family, worked the land well and
always followed the Son,
Hang up your shovel inside of the barn; your work
here on earth is done.

A faith few possess led your journey through life,
often a jagged and stony way,
The sun is setting, the cattle are all bedded and
here now is the end of your day.

Your love of God's soil has passed on to your kin;
the stories flow like fine wine,
Wash off your work boots in the puddle left by
blessed rain one final time.

You always believed that the good Lord would
provide and He always has somehow,
Take off your gloves and put them down, no more
sweat and worry for you now.

Your labour is done, your home now is heaven; no
more must you wait,
Your legacy lives on, your love of the land, and we
will close the gate.

Quote by Ralph Waldo Emerson

To laugh often and love much; To win the respect
of intelligent people and the affection of children;
To earn the appreciation of honest critics and
endure the betrayal of false friends; To appreciate
beauty, to find the best in others; To leave the
world a bit better, whether by a healthy child or a
garden patch; To have played and laughed with
enthusiasm and sung with exultation; To know even
one life has breathed easier because you have lived;
This is to have succeeded.

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace,
Where there is hatred, let me show love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he
leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths
of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art
with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence
of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the
days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the
Lord for ever.

List of Common Funeral Hymns

Jerusalem

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountain green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

etc.

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/1k9s8IASKVlgYQhndsWH6N?si=ba0fa20d9a3d48ef>

The Lord's My Shepherd

The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green; He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

etc.

Tune: Crimond

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/2yVmGhN9ZIt2xorfhikZpL?si=e0171d3e8c0e4c63>

Tune: Brother James' Air

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/6OqpczOxHE88KkjXhOEqQ0?si=fde163b73574413b>

Abide With Me

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

etc.

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/55RKhXrygmKQtahsOZkCIV?si=dba969f532df4a8d>

Amazing Grace

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

etc.

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/5Lr2cTUK0RYjOuRKsvcNB1?si=cfe3815272574a92>

The Old Rugged Cross

And I'll cherish the old rugged cross
Till my trophies at last I lay down
And I will cling to the old rugged cross
And exchange it some day for a crown

etc.

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/5quQNYORyaGnIRfwdzmNk3?si=fa24591f9a2d4e1e>

Lord of All Hopefulness

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
Whose trust, ever childlike, no cares can destroy,
Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the
day.

etc.

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/0DKCqy752Ur4FRpMCLdLUc?si=d311b2c933f348e5>

List of Common Funeral Hymns

All Things Bright and Beautiful

All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.

etc.

Tune: Monk

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/6W4iI5iwRtLUiVHm8iEpuk?si=db4416b34df24cf5>

Tune: Royal Oak

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/1ppcH1IWDDhNgJgMkKgSfk?si=1b605cfc965f4d2d>

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heav'n, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.

etc.

Tune: Blaenwern

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/0f0ASl5szy5ybB3Tuyy0Gf?si=aadad7283e88417c>

Tune: Stainer

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/3UF3TYIVZahAR7Yb9Attul?si=f4647a23356342c2>

Morning Has Broken

Morning has broken,
Like the first morning,
Blackbird has spoken
Like the first bird

etc.

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/5UrBPX3CmtNKRl6DZtB5q?si=91a1b80f148548a1>

The Day Thou Gavest Lord Has Ended

The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended;
The darkness falls at Thy behest;
To Thee our morning hymns ascended,
Thy praise shall sanctify our rest.

etc.

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/0GlaA5BWatrW63XmqyoBaT?si=ec49f2065a154060>

We Plough The Fields and Scatter

We plow the fields and scatter
the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered
by God's almighty hand.

etc.

Spotify link: <https://open.spotify.com/track/1cXVAfaVWqM5ILDYVpbxhn5?si=ae121e8cad0c4d68>