

Funeral Poems and Readings

Often poems and readings can provide comfort to those who are grieving at a funeral. Sometimes it is difficult to find the right words to express what you're feeling, and a poem or reading can be a powerful or moving alternative.

Here is a selection of the most popular and well-known religious and non-religious poems and readings (there are many more on the internet). *Please acknowledge the author in any printed materials.*

Afterglow

I'd like the memory of me to be a happy one.
I'd like to leave an afterglow 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 when life is done.

Helen Lowrie Marshall

The Broken Chain

We little knew that morning
That God was going to call your name.
In life we loved you dearly;
In death we do the same.

It broke our hearts to lose you,
You did not go alone.
For part of us went with you,
The day God called you home.

You left us peaceful memories,
Your love is still our guide,
And though we cannot see you,
You are always at our side.

Our family chain is broken,
And nothing seems the same,
But as God calls us one by one
The chain will link again.

Ron Tranmer

Do Not Stand At My Grave and Weep

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.

Mary Elizabeth Frye

God's Garden

God looked around his Garden and found an empty place.
He then looked down upon his earth and saw your loving face.
He put his arms around you and lifted you to rest.
His Garden must be beautiful, he always takes the best.

He knew that you were suffering, he knew you were in pain.
And knew that you would never get well on earth again.
He saw your path was difficult, he closed your tired eyes,
He whispered to you "Peace be Thine" and gave you wings to fly.

When we saw you sleeping so calm and free of pain,
We would not wish you back to earth to suffer once again.
You've left us precious memories, your love will be our guide,
You live on through your children, you're always by our side.

It broke our hearts to lose you, but you did not go alone.
For part of us went with you on the day God called you home.

Melissa Shreve



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He (She) Is Gone

You can shed tears that he is gone
Or you can smile because he has lived.

You can close your eyes and pray that he'll come back
Or you can open your eyes and see all he's left.

Your heart can be empty because you can't see him
Or you can be full of the love 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 him and only that he's gone
Or you can cherish his memory and let it live on.

You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back
Or you can do what he'd want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on.

David Harkins

I'm Free

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
I'm following the path God has laid you see.
I took His hand when I heard him call
I turned my back and left it all.

I could not stay another day
To laugh, to love, to work, to play.
Tasks left undone must stay that way
I found that peace at the close of day.

If my parting has left a void
Then fill it with remembered joy.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss
Oh yes, these things I too will miss.

Be not burdened with times of sorrow
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My life's been full, I savoured much
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.

Perhaps my time seemed all too brief
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your hearts, and peace to thee
God wanted me now; He set me free.

Author Unknown



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Irish Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
The rains fall soft upon your fields
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Traditional Gaelic Blessing

Look For Me In Rainbows

Time for me to go now
I won't say goodbye
Look for me in rainbows
Way up in the sky

In the morning sunrise
When all the world is new
Just look for me and love me
As you know I loved you

Time for me to leave you
I won't say goodbye
Look for me in rainbows
High up in the sky

In the evening sunset
When all the world is through,
Just look for me and love me
And I'll be close to you

It won't be forever
The day will come and then
My loving arms will hold you
When we meet again

Time for us to part now
we won't say goodbye
Look for me in rainbows
shining in the sky.

Every waking moment
and all your whole life through
Just look for me and love me
as you know I loved you.

Just wish me to be near you, and I'll be there with you.

Conn Bernard



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Miss Me But Let Me Go

When I come to the end of the road
and the sun has set on 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 your head bowed low,
Remember the love 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.

Author Unknown

To Those Whom I Love and Those Who Love Me

When I am gone, release me, let me go.
I have so many things to see and do,
You mustn't tie yourself to me with too many tears,
But be thankful we had so many good years.
I gave you my love, and you can only guess
How much you've given me in happiness.
I thank you for the love that you have shown,
but now it is time I travelled on alone.
So grieve for me a while, if grieve you must
Then let your grief be comforted by trust
that it is only for a while that we must part,
So treasure the memories within your heart.
I won't be far away for life goes on.
And if you need me, call and I will come.
Though you can't see or touch me, I will be near
And if you listen with your heart, you'll hear
All my love around you soft and clear
And then, when you come this way along,
I'll greet you with a smile and a "Welcome Home".

Author Unknown



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Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside the still waters.

He restores my soul;

He leads 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 You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You anoint my head with oil;

My cup runs over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

All the days of my life;

And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

The Holy Bible - NKJV

John 14:1-6

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

Jesus the Way to the Father

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

The Holy Bible - NIV



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