2401-OPS-1002 Organize Religious Components of a Command Memorial Ceremony

TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Given a requirement, organize religious components of a command memorial ceremony, to honor the deceased and care for the living. (2401-OPS-1002)

ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Without the aid of reference, identify the requirements of a memorial ceremony, in accordance with reference NAVPERS 15555 Navy Military Funerals. (2401-OPS-1002a)

2. Without the aid of reference, identify the requirements to conduct a memorial ceremony, in accordance with reference NAVPERS 15555 Navy Military Funerals. (2401-OPS-1002b)

3. Given a scenario, organize religious components of a command memorial ceremony, in accordance with reference NAVPERS 15555 Navy Military Funerals. (2401-OPS-1002c)
A Memorial Service is a commemorative service of worship held for the family members, friends and military unit comrades in honor of deceased service members or persons. During a memorial service, the soul of the deceased is given honor and respect through words and prayers. It is the RP’s responsibility to organize the religious components and logistic requirements of a command memorial ceremony to allow the living to respectfully honor the deceased.

While you and I may not be comfortable talking about death, especially the death of fellow Marines and Sailors, the religious ministry team is a “key player” for the command to meet the needs of honoring fallen comrades and comforting the bereaved. Whether it is in a combat zone, in a training environment or even in garrison it is very likely that your RMT will be required to provide a memorial ceremony at some time. While it is difficult to consider the death of fellow Marines and Sailors, the ministry of honoring our comrades and comforting the grieving through a memorial ceremony cannot be understated. The RMT needs to approach this ministry with planning and professionalism to provide Divine presence in this difficult time. Preparation is the key to successful planning for a memorial ceremony.

**INSTRUCTOR & STUDENT NOTE**

It is important to understand that no two Memorial Ceremonies will ever be the exact same. Certain Memorial Ceremony details will vary due to the circumstances surrounding the loss, the location of the loss, the faith group of the deceased, specifics within the parent unit, as well as attendee details. With the amount of variables that can occur, it would be impossible to cover every possible scenario within this lesson. For this reason, we begin this lesson with stressing the importance of the RP understanding his/her unit S.O.P. and knowing which references will assist in times of need.

1. **Administrative Requirements.**

   a. **Know Your References.** RMT’s should begin their preparation by working with your unit’s adjutant and executive officer to prepare a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for memorial ceremonies.

      (1) Unit SOPs should be developed for both in garrison and in combat zone situations.
For SOP validation as well as Memorial Service preparations, it is imperative that every RP read, refer to, and comprehend the contents of the following reference list:

- NAVPERS 15555D Navy Military Funerals
- NAVEDTRA 14227B Religious Program Specialist (RP)
- MCRP 3-30D.3, App C Religious Ministry Team Handbook
- MCTP 3-30D Religious Ministry in the USMC
- MCO 3040.4 Marine Corps Casualty Assistance
- MILPERSMAN 1770-160 Casualty Assistance Calls Program

b. NAVPERS 15555D Navy Military Funerals – This Primary reference contains information on the following;

1. Policy and Eligibility
2. Military Funeral Honors
3. Memorial Services
4. Chaplain Participation
5. The National Ensign
6. Honorary Pallbearers
7. Required Forms (Appendix G)
8. Reporting Requirements (Appendix H)
9. Burial at Sea
10. Specific Faith Requirements (App. A - F)

c. NAVEDTRA 14227B Religious Program Specialist (RP) – This reference contains information on the following;

1. Introduction to the RP Rating
2. Administration
3. Religious Advisement (Chapter 3)
4. Ministry Support and Accommodation
5. Pastoral Care Support
6. Finance and Accounting
7. Shipboard Library
8. The Religious Program Manager
9. The World’s Major Religions

d. MCRP 3-30D.3, App C Religious Ministry Team Handbook – This reference contains information on the following;

1. A Command / Unit Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) for Funerals and Memorial Services (SAMPLE)

e. MCTP 3-30D Religious Ministry in the USMC – This reference contains information on the following;
(1) Page 4-5, Field Memorial Ceremonies paragraph provides your Chaplain a validation of your Religious Ministry Team (RMT) responsibilities.

f. MCO 3040.4 Marine Corps Casualty Assistance Program - This reference contains information on the following;

(1) Provides you with knowledge and understanding of how your Marine Corps Parent Command will respond in the event of personnel loss and will assist the RMT with how and when to best support your Parent Command.

g. MILPERSMAN 1770-160 Casualty Assistance Calls Program - This reference contains information on the following;

(1) This Department of Defense (DoD) reference provides you with knowledge and understanding of how your Parent Command will conduct Casualty Assistance and will assist the RMT with how and when to best support your Parent Command.

1. FAITH GROUP CONSIDERATIONS FOR MORTUARY AFFAIRS: If your unit sustains fatal casualties in the combat zone, the RMT may be asked to advise the command regarding the burial considerations for different religions. These are some of the considerations for the major faith groups. Further research may be needed. It is the RPs responsibility to know where to reference and to be compliant.

   a. As you prepare for a deployment you should take time to research the faith group considerations of members within your unit. This would help you be ready to respond if fatal casualties are sustained. Although numerous religious organizations exist, the Department of Defense (DoD) recognizes the following as the four primary faith groups.

      (1) Buddhism - Funerals usually focus on a reflection on the transitions of life. Bodies can be either buried or cremated.

      (2) Christianity - Funerals normally take place within a week or two of death. Christians may be either buried or cremated.
(3) Islam - Burial must take place as soon as possible after death. Cremation is strictly forbidden. Prayers and ritual washing and shrouding of bodies are carried out at Mosques. Mourning periods of up to 3 days follows this.

(4) Judaism - A dying Jew should not be alone; wherever possible, a Rabbi or any practicing Jewish leader should be asked to attend, so that the dying person may recite the appropriate prayers. Jews are buried as soon as possible after death in a simple ceremony. Reform Judaism does not object to cremation. Following a death, there is often a week of private mourning (Shiva). Following the death of a parent, an observant Jewish man may wish to go to the Synagogue to pray morning, afternoon and evening for 11 months of the Jewish calendar.

1. MEMORIAL CEREMONY RIGGING REQUIREMENTS: Rigging for memorial ceremonies will vary according to situation, command, and Faith Group. The following are base-line factors which will remain constant;

- Know your Environment and Audience.
- Coordinate Ceremony Date, Time and Location with Command, Chaplain and Facilities Manager.
- Review Security Requirements and Request Support as necessary.
- Review Fallen Service Member Battlefield Cross Requirements and request Support as necessary.
- Support Chaplain with Responsive Reading Requirements.
- Review Seating Requirements and Request Support as necessary.
- Review Music Requirements and Request Support as necessary.
- Review Program Pamphlet Requirements and request printing support as necessary.

a. Know your Environment and Audience - circumstances surrounding any loss will affect the level of emotion and sensitivity present at each ceremony.

(1) Communications are paramount to ensure each ceremony best supports the needs and faith of those paying respect for the loss.
b. **Ceremony Date, Time and Location** – must be coordinated in a timely manner and meets the needs of the Parent Command and those attending.

c. **Security Requirements** will always be dictated by location and circumstances surrounding the loss.

(1) If required, request security support from Parent Command and/or Military Police as soon as the ceremony date, time and location is established.

d. **Battlefield Cross Requirements** must be coordinate with Command for Battlefield Cross requests and Chaplain for display location. Battlefield Cross Components consist of;

(1) Helmet with Cover
(2) Rifle with bayonet (Inverted)
(3) Combat Boots
(4) Dog Tags (If available)
(5) Sand Bags (If required)

e. **Responsive Reading Requirements** are prayers and words of remembrance conducted by the Chaplain during the ceremony.

(1) The RP will coordinate with the Command to ensure the Chaplain has enough information to best develop the responsive reading.

f. **Seating Requirements** must be coordinated with the Command for number of ceremony attendees to ensure adequate seating is available. Coordinate support for seating as soon as attendee number is established and verify is VIP seating is required.

g. **Music Requirements** – Coordinate either live or pre-recorded music as well as special music requests. Attain either live or pre-recorded Taps.

h. **Program Pamphlet Requirements** – Coordinate with Command for Photos, Units Logos, specific requests, and quantity to be printed. Coordinated with Chaplain on format, printing location and cost of printing. If a bulletin/program pamphlet is required for the ceremony, the RP will often be the one to design and produce the bulletin. A sample bulletin is included in your student materials to give you an idea of how they typically look.
Marines Prayer

Almighty Father whose command is over all and whose love never fails, make me aware of Thy presence and obedient to Thy will. Keep me true to my best self, guarding me against dishonesty in purpose and deed and helping me to live so that I can face my fellow Marines, my loved ones and Thee without shame or fear. Protect my family. Give me the will to do the work of a Marine and to accept my share of responsibilities with vigor and enthusiasm. Grant me the courage to be proficient in my daily performance. Keep me loyal and faithful to my superiors and to the duties and country and The Marine Corps have entrusted to me. Make me considerate of those committed to my leadership. Help me to wear my uniform with dignity, and let it remind me daily of the traditions which I must uphold.

If I am inclined to doubt, steady my faith; if I am tempted, make me strong to resist, if I should miss the mark, give me the courage to try again.

Guide me with the light of truth and grant me wisdom by which I may understand the answer to my prayer.

Amen

Service in Memory of
Lance Corporal Robert E. Eaton V
Support Company, 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion
Second Marine Division

Protestant Chapel
Camp Lejeune, North Carolina
14 November, 2003
1300

Eternal Father, Strong To Save

Eternal Father, strong to save
Whose arms hath bound the restless wave,
Whod id its the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep.
O, hear us when we cry to Thee
For those in peril on the sea.

Eternal Father, grant we pray
To all Marines, both night and day,
The courage, honor, strength, and skill
Their land to serve. Thy law fulfill.
Be Thou the shield forevermore
From every peril to the Corps.

Our deepest sympathy is expressed to
Lance Corporal Robert Eaton’s family and friends.
1. **PRE-CEREMONY PRACTICE AND STANDARD ORDER OF EVENTS:**

Coordinate Pre-Ceremony Practice Date, Time and Location with Command, Chaplain and Facilities Manager. If time does not permit for practice, ensure the Chaplain is made aware of any and all details prior to the actual ceremony. Standard Order of Events are as follows;

- Prelude
- Opening Sentences
- Hymn
- Invocation
- Responsive Reading
- Special Music
- Scripture Lesson
- Moment of Silence
- Taps
- Hymn
- Benediction
- Postlude

a. **Prelude** – Prior to the Opening Sentences, the selected music is played and programs are handed out.

b. **Opening Sentences** – Prior to Hymn, opening remarks are given by the Commanding Officer, Chaplain or Ceremony Narrator.

c. **Hymn** – Pre-Selected by Command, Family or Chaplain.

d. **Invocation** – Words given by the Chaplain.

e. **Responsive Reading** – Given by Chaplain or Requested Family Member.

f. **Special Music** – Pre-Selected by Command, Family or Chaplain.

g. **Scripture Lesson** – Given by the Chaplain.

h. **Moment of Silence** – To honor the deceased.

i. **Taps** – Played either live or pre-recorded.

j. **Hymn** – Pre-Selected by Command, Family or Chaplain.

k. **Benediction** – Given by the Chaplain.

l. **Postlude** – Conclusion of Ceremony. Time allotted for Family and Friends to pay final respects.
1. Common **UNRIGGING and RECORDING REQUIREMENTS** are as follows;

   a. Provide assistance with any facilities clean-up.

   b. Return all temp-loaned items.

   c. Record all Memorial Ceremony requirements in RMT Log Book.
      • Name of deceased.
      • Name of chaplain performing ceremony.
      • Time and date of ceremony.
      • Location of ceremony.
      • As specifically as possible, location of temporary interment.
      • Number of attendees.
      • A copy of the memorial bulletin/program pamphlet.
      • Any incurred expenses.
      • If Temporary Interment is involved, ensure you record any and all dates, times, locations, circumstances, explanations and points of contact.
MEMORIAL CEREMONY FOR NON-CLERGY USE IN TEMPORARY INTERMENT SITUATIONS

OPENING SENTENCE: God is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? God is the stronghold of my life, of whom should I be afraid?

PRAYER: Almighty God, we commemorate these, your servants, remembering with gratitude their courage and strength. We hold before you those who mourn them. Look upon your bereaved servants with mercy. As this day brings memories of those they have lost, may it also bring your consolation, and the assurance of your eternal care.

AMEN.

WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE: We gather to pay tribute to the memory of these dead who have paid the ultimate price for the defense of our nation. We are honored to have served with them. They were our friends and our compatriots, and we shall sorely miss them.

What grief we feel amid the shock of battle. We are people who know fear and death, yet we follow duty’s call despite the uncertainty of the hours and days ahead.

We ask the blessing of God upon our nation, those who serve, and for the dead who no longer stand in our ranks.

MOMENT OF SILENCE: Let us pay tribute in a moment of silence.

TAPS: (If bugler or tape and player are available).

CLOSING PRAYER: God, as we honor these here fallen, protect those who carry on. Comfort, O God, both the living and the dead. Keep us safe from evil. Let us live with honor. Grant us courage. Be our guide, in your holy name.

AMEN.
REFERENCES:

Marine Corps Drill and Ceremonies Manual, MCO P5060.20
Navy Military Funerals, NAVPERS 15555
Religious Ministry in the United States Marine Corps, MCWP 6-12
Religious Ministry Team Handbook, MCRP 6-12A
Religious Ministry in the U.S. Navy, NWP 1-05