

MOTHER'S DAY SERVICE

(At assembly, each Elk should be handed a carnation - a red one for a living Mother, or a white one for a departed Mother. Before the service begins, he/she should pin the flower on his/her lapel.)

EXALTED RULER: "Our purpose in meeting here today is to show our deep and lasting recognition of a Mother's influence as a continuous, predominant force in our lives. In this way we are responding to the deep sense of reverence for Motherhood, which finds universal expression throughout Canada on the second Sunday of May in every year. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, for which we are proud to be members, has taken a leading part in the promotion of this celebration of Mother's Day across the country. Our Ceremonial today represents our part in that celebration, and we welcome gladly your participation in it. Because Remembrance, Benevolence, Protection and Inspiration - the highest attributes of Motherhood - find a cherished place in the code and life of every Elk, we join in this service with what we feel is our own."

"Let me suggest that in this hour we should stay the flight of time, and fortify ourselves with Remembrance of Mother's Benevolence and Protection. Let us encourage the flow of the Inspiration that this celebration in her honour naturally brings to us. Let us wander, for a brief spell, back through those Golden Gates which Memory has left ajar for us. May we proclaim again our Reverence and our Love, and maintain in ever-increasing measure our Loyalty and our Devotion through the years to come."

"Not for the star-crowned heroes,
The men who conquer and slay,
But a song for those who bore them:
The Mothers, braver than they."

(The Vocalist, or the Lodge Quartet, should sing here an appropriate song, such as "Rock Me to Sleep, Mother.")

TRIBUTE TO MOTHER

(The Exalted Ruler, or a Member of the Lodge designated by him/her for the purpose, then delivers the Tribute to Mother, as follows")

" We have arranged this simple ceremony in honour of Mother. We realize that full justice to such a subject can scarcely be done by any human being, or assemblage of human beings.

We might fill this room with the rarest and most fragrant flowers, a Celestial Choir might sing the sweetest songs, silver-tongued orators might do their best to sway you with their eloquence, but all of these would fail to pay adequate tribute to the theme of this occasion. Songs and addresses, coupled as they may be with the best our Service of Remembrance can offer, may do no more than remind us of the debt we owe. This, my Friends, is a debt we can never repay in full."

"You have heard in the past many references to Mother as 'The One Who Went Into the Valley of the Great Shadow in order that we might have our being'. How true that is! And how many shadows has this ever-faithful guardian endured so that you and I might be equipped with the forces of life! Where could we find another who would make the sacrifices, suffer the pains

and continue to face the storms of life so that the child might be protected? Who can measure the value of that priceless jewel, a Mother's Love? If the Almighty ever searched for a treasure-chest in which to place the jewels of Love, Kindness, self-sacrifice, Devotion and Patience, His All-seeing Eye must have selected a Mother's heart."

"From the cradle to the grave this treasure-house has poured out its blessings to guide, to heal and to cherish mankind. There is no thought of reward or recompense for the hours of patient waiting at the bedside of sickness, or for the pain and disappointment on those occasions when you or I may have failed to fulfil a Mother's deepest longings and desires for us."

"Who are the real heroes of Life? Are they the great leaders of nations, the generals, the statesmen, the financiers, the scientists, the philosophers, the poets and the geniuses? Or are they the quiet, patient, unselfish Queens of every home - the women who have planted in the hearts of their men the Inspiration for the acts which brought fame to them?"

"We do not need to go far afield in order to make the test of a Mother's devotion. We have countless examples of it in our own country, in our own Province, in the home of every Elk. You Brothers and Sisters who are wearing the red carnation today in honour of the Mother who still lives, know all about her sacrifices. You can feel, too, the influence of the Love that fills her wonderful heart, the heart that would give life-blood for you. Today the white flower is to honour the memory of the Mother who has laid down her burdens, and who rests from her labours, have the recollection of that sweet and noble face to encourage you, and to cheer you on in the battles of life."

"Tonight (today) let us blend the red with the white, and link them both with the golden chain of Respect and Affection for the best friend we have ever known, represented by the finest word in our language - Mother."

(At the conclusion of the Tribute, the Exalted Ruler calls upon the Officers.) (-o-o-)

EXALTED RULER: "Brother/Sister Esquire."

ESQUIRE: "I speak of Remembrance, which brings a message from the hallowed past. I recall with satisfaction the memories of a loving Mother who made childhood happy, who was our faithful Guide through the perplexities of youth, and our Strength amid the difficulties of advancing manhood. Those of us who are still fortunate enough to enjoy association with her, and those of us who have a cherished memory of her in our hearts, alike pay this Tribute of Remembrance of all that she has been, all she is and all she will be forever in our lives."

(Here an appropriate song, such as "That Wonderful Mother of Mine", should be rendered.)

EXALTED RULER: "Brother/Sister Lecturing Knight"

LECTURING KNIGHT: "I speak of Benevolence. In all walks of Life, Benevolence is never exemplified so unselfishly, nor in a higher and holier degree, than in a Mother's constant Love and Service. Her very fingers have been time-worn in unremitting care for us. Her one thought has been for our welfare and happiness."

(The singing of "Rock-a-bye, Baby" here is suggested.)

EXALTED RULER: "Brother/Sister Loyal Knight."

LOYAL KNIGHT: "I speak of Protection, which has a particularly fraternal meaning for all Elks. What better and more comforting Protection shall we ever know in infancy, in childhood or even in maturity than the Protection of a Mother's loving arms? Her strength seems to fail not at any time, and her courage is always ready to meet the demands made upon her. On every occasion she responds as only a Mother can."

(The singing of "Mother Machree" here is suggested.)

EXALTED RULER: "Brother/Sister Leading Knight."

LEADING KNIGHT: "I speak of Inspiration - that Power which moves us to press forward when our companions seem to be falling by the wayside. It is a living, vitalizing, ever-present Force. It radiates from our Mothers, those Guardian-angels whose influence uplifts and sustains us throughout our lives."

(The singing of "Mother o' Mine" here is suggested.)

EXALTED RULER: "Youth fades, love may droop and the leaves of friendship fall, but a Mother's love for us outlives them all." (-o-o-o-)

CHAPLAIN: "O God, our Father, we look upon Thee at this time, and implore Thy Blessing on our solemn and beautiful Service. For the sacred and hallowed memories that have inspired the observance of Mother's Day, we thank Thee. May the sweet and gentle recollections which fill our hearts and minds as we participate in these tributes make us stronger and better, worthier to do Thy Will. Bless the Mothers all across the land in their task of guiding and inspiring childhood. May their gentle and ennobling influence be always to our girls and boys the finest and most beneficent power they shall ever know. May Thy Light Perpetual shine upon them, and give them joy and comfort and peace. Amen."

(All respond: "Amen.") (-o-)