

## Words to Guide the Newly Departed for Funeral Service (2)

These words are reverently addressed to  
the Eternal Buddha Shakyamuni,  
all buddhas, and all other honored ones.

Now, on [month/day/year], this good son [or daughter/boy/girl], aged [number], having reached the last moment of this lifetime, has departed for the beyond. [Appropriate pronoun] has received the rare gift of life as a human being and encountered the Lotus Sutra that is rarely met.

However, as the human body is a provisional union of the five great elements, [appropriate pronoun] could never avoid death. Even our teacher and master, Shakyamuni, showed his followers the appearance of extinguishment from this world, although he really did not extinguish himself. Even heavenly beings cannot escape from the five kinds of decay. How much more impossible is it for us human beings to escape death?

Now, as the dearly departed's virtuous deeds in [appropriate pronoun] life are remembered, in place of [appropriate pronoun] secular name, [appropriate pronoun] has received the posthumous name of [Posthumous name] (Recite it twice).

Chapter 16 of the Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wondrous Dharma, "The Life Span of the Eternal Tathagata," says:

"Those who perform virtuous deeds  
And are gentle and upright of nature  
Will all see me here  
Teaching the Dharma."

Chapter 16 also says,

"How can I cause living beings to  
Embark upon the unsurpassable Way  
And quickly accomplish embodiment as buddhas?"

This Lotus Sutra is a light guiding us in the dark, a staff for us to climb a steep mountain, a ship ferrying us across a river, and a bridge leading us across to the wondrous realm of nirvana.

All buddhas, all bodhisattvas, all guardian spirits, and especially Founder Nikkyo, Teacher of One

Vehicle, and Cofounder Myoko, Bodhisattva of the Way of Compassion, will joyfully lead the deceased together with all the ancestors of the [family name] family. They will praise [appropriate pronoun]'s virtuous deeds and take [appropriate pronoun]'s hands with affection, guiding [appropriate pronoun] to the highest state of nirvana

Now, members of the Sangha in attendance here, all of pure heart, sincerely express our gratitude to the hands of deep benevolence and compassion that the Eternal Buddha and the Founder and Cofounder extended to the deceased. Further, we make a vow to pursue the bodhisattva way looking up to the deceased as a person of high virtue.

We earnestly ask that the Buddha and all the buddhas and honored ones may know our vow and assist the departed in entering the jeweled land of eternal tranquility so that [appropriate pronoun] may quickly attain the Way of the Buddha.

Namu Myoho Renge Kyo (*Strike the gong once.*)

## Notes

1. After the third paragraph above, make an additional statement appropriate to the circumstances of the deceased's passing. Refer to the examples 1-1 and 1-2 below.
2. After the third paragraph above, additionally state the date when the departed passed away and the reference to the departed in his or her lifetime. Make the text appropriate to the deceased's personality, virtuous deeds, accomplishments, and so on. Refer to the examples 2-1 to 2-6.
3. After the fourth paragraph above, mention the posthumous name by explaining the meanings of the Chinese characters used in it. Instead of after the third paragraph mentioned above in Note 2, you can incorporate here into the explanation the deceased's personality, virtuous deeds, accomplishments, and so on.

### Example 1-1

Since the departed was recently struck by illness, the best medicine and treatment were given by every possible means, and the family members and friends have sincerely cared for [appropriate pronoun]. But just as a flame goes out when there is no more oil in the lamp, [appropriate pronoun] has peacefully departed from this secular world to that spiritual realm.

### Example 1-2

The departed met with an unforeseeable accident, which caused [appropriate pronoun] an immediate and unexpected journey from this world into the beyond.

### **Examples 2-1**

The departed [full name] was given [Dharma name] as Dharma name in this life. On [month/day/year], [appropriate pronoun] was born and, thanks to [appropriate pronoun] abundant merits from the past, in [year] [appropriate pronoun] established a connection with the Dharma that is rarely met. Since then, as a member of Rissho Koseikai, [appropriate pronoun] has always embraced the Lotus Sutra and pursued the wondrous way of a bodhisattva. In [month, year], [appropriate pronoun] was appointed as [name of the role], and from then on, [appropriate pronoun] has been thoroughly dedicated to the noble work of sharing the Dharma with people and helping them attain liberation.

### **Examples 2-2**

On [month/day/year], the deceased received the gift of life in this world. Fortunately, [appropriate pronoun] became a member of Rissho Kosei-kai, and while accumulating the merits through learning the Dharma, [appropriate pronoun] has pursued the compassionate way of spreading the true Dharma and liberating all sentient beings. [Appropriate pronoun] taught many people with compassion for spiritual transformation, which contributed to the development of the [Dharma center name] Dharma center.

### **Examples 2-3**

In [year], the deceased was employed by [name of the company or organization]. Since then, [appropriate pronoun] has strenuously worked for it with diligence and honesty, thus serving the world in a broad sense. While venerating [appropriate pronoun] ancestors and cherishing [appropriate pronoun] family at home, [appropriate pronoun] has taken refuge in the Three Treasures and strove to pursue the bodhisattva way of enlightening others through one's own practice.

### **Examples 2-4**

When we reflect on the deceased, we know [appropriate pronoun] is gifted with the virtue of undertaking a new business, thus establishing [company name]. Since then, [appropriate pronoun] has made efforts from dawn to dusk to serve the development of the company. Spiritually rich and gentle in expressions and words, [appropriate pronoun] has been thorough in constant diligence day and night. [Appropriate pronoun] has walked the Buddha Way applying into life the principle of oneness of the secular and Buddhist truths. In [year], [appropriate pronoun] joined Rissho Kosei-kai by connecting [appropriate pronoun] with the Dharma that is rarely met, and has never spared [appropriate pronoun] life nor body for it with the Sangha members, all pure in heart, thus

demonstrating a model of lay bodhisattvas.

### **Examples 2-5**

When we reflect on the deceased, we recognize that [*appropriate pronoun*] married into [*family name*] family due to many karmic connections from the past and encountered the Dharma that is rarely met. In [*year*], according to her virtues, she was appointed an important role of [*name of the role*] and strove to fulfill her duty with diligence in religious practice.

### **Examples 2-6**

When we reflect on the deceased, we acknowledge that [*appropriate pronoun*] served for the sake of people and the world, venerated [*appropriate pronoun*] ancestors, and offered [*appropriate pronoun*] gratitude and sincerity to them through reciting the sutra. [*Appropriate pronoun*] walked the Buddha Way never sparing [*appropriate pronoun*] life nor body by single-mindedly wishing to see the Buddha, thus completing a life of exclusive dedication to the Dharma.

### **Examples 3-1**

The characters incorporated in the posthumous name mean that, to the very end, the deceased always shared the Dharma with a gentle countenance and loving words and continually took refuge in the Three Treasures with a pure heart. In a word, this posthumous name shows [*appropriate pronoun*] eminent virtue.

### **Examples 3-2**

The first three characters 〇生院 of the posthumous name mean that the deceased has been an example for the faithful and lived out [*appropriate pronoun*] allotted span of life, and the characters 〇〇徳信士[信女, 童男, 童女] denotes [*appropriate pronoun*] single-mindedly walking the Way of the Dharma and seeking its true meaning.

### **Examples 3-3**

The characters incorporated in the posthumous name mean that the deceased has always been kind to others, always with a mind of forbearance, and has peacefully completed this life.