



Words of Remembrance

Revised November 15, 2018

- You have been asked to deliver some words of remembrance either before or after the funeral liturgy of a loved one. This is a great honor and requires forethought and preparation on your part. These words of remembrance should not exceed five minutes. It is recommended that you type these so that they may be placed on the cantor stand before the liturgy.
- Be selective: What are the main few things that you want everyone to hear and know about the deceased? Make remarks that describe their good character and how they lived out their faith – words that lift the mourners' spirits and allow them to smile.
- Here are what we have found to be some best practices as well as some things to avoid.

Best Practices

- Stay focused: Your task is to speak briefly in remembrance of the deceased and do so in a spirit of composure.
- Prepare and practice: It is best when you prepare and practice a written recollection of an event in the life of the deceased that highlights an endearing quality of the person.
- Go for brevity: Five minutes **maximum**. Know what you will say to start and know what your ending will be.

Things to Avoid

- Avoid making it a eulogy – a formal speech in praise of a person.
- Avoid making it an extended obituary. In other words, you do not have to recount the person's long life history and achievements in great detail.
- Don't leave the mourners sadder than when you started.
- Don't try to do it off the cuff. You might start to wander and not know how to bring what you're saying to a good closing.

But Above All...

- Pray about what you need to say and ask God to bless you in this ministry.