



## CHAPLAIN/MEMORIAL

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### Inspirational Reflections

#### **DREAMS COME TRUE by Helen Steiner Rice**

Often your task will be many, and more than you think you can do...  
Often the road will be rugged and the hills insurmountable, too...  
Always remember, the hills ahead are never as steep as they seem,  
And with FAITH in your heart start upward and climb till you reach your dream,  
Nothing in life that is worthy is ever too hard to achieve  
If you have the courage to try it; If you have the FAITH to believe...  
FAITH is a force that is greater than knowledge or power or skill  
And many defeats turn to triumph if you trust in GOD's wisdom and will,  
Faith is a mover of mountains, there's nothing that God cannot do,  
So start out today with Faith in your heart and "Climb Till Your Dreams Come True"

Submitted by Douglas Bible

Past National Commander, Sons of The American Legion 1986-1987

#### **THE PEACE PRAYER OF ST. FRANCIS**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace;  
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
Where there is injury, pardon;  
Where there is doubt, faith;  
Where there is despair, hope;  
Where there is darkness, light;  
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;  
To be understood, as to understand;  
To be loved, as to love;  
For it is in giving that we receive,  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
And it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.  
Amen.

# Honoring Our Deceased Members: The Draping of the Charter Ceremony

One of the most beautiful traditions held by our Auxiliary is the Draping of the Charter, a meaningful way to honor members who have passed away. In our unit, this ceremony is observed quarterly. When a member dies, we send their family a card and a cash memorial as a tribute and an invitation to the ceremony. The family is invited to attend this portion of the meeting, which typically takes place immediately after the Unit meeting opens.

Following the ceremony, the family members are introduced and given an opportunity to speak if they wish. This moment holds deep significance not only for our members but also for the families, as it demonstrates that their loved one was an important part of our unit and will be missed. We encourage units that do not currently practice Draping the Charter to consider adopting this tradition. Often, the member being honored was dedicated and responsible for paying their dues, supporting the Auxiliary throughout their membership.

## Ceremony Script

The ceremony is conducted by the President and the Unit Chaplain. The charter is displayed with a black crepe, ready to be placed as a mark of remembrance.

**President:** We have assembled here at the call of our maker who has taken from us one of our beloved members. We have come to give, by simple token, official expression of the grief of the \_\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary Unit # \_\_\_\_\_. Let us bow our heads in prayer.

**Chaplain:** We give Thee thanks for the good example of all thy servants who, having finished their course in faith, so now rest from their labors. Help us to know that we shall be remembered for what we have done for others, not what others have done for us. Each of us exerts an influence upon those with whom we come in contact. As we go along the years, a single act of advice, encouragement, or caution may decide a question of usefulness and happiness for another. O God whose presence is everywhere and whose mercy never fails, we magnify Thee for Thy gifts, especially for the promise of the peace which passes all understanding. We commit ourselves to Thee in your trust. Amen.

**President:** We stand before the document which gives our unit life and being. Under its authority, years of devoted service were given by \_\_\_\_insert member names\_\_\_\_. They contributed greatly to its significance. Their service is ended but the results of their loyal effort will go on and on for our American Legion Auxiliary and for God and the Country which the Auxiliary serves.

It is therefore fitting that about our charter we should drape this crepe of black, an expression of sorrow that is in our hearts and of the mourning of \_\_\_\_insert unit name and unit number\_\_\_\_ American Legion Auxiliary over its great loss. (Drape the charter.)

Now we ask God's blessing for our departed friend and co-worker, then go silently to carry forward the task to which she was giving so much, when called away.

**Chaplain:** (This may be substituted with any reading)

When I am gone, release me. Let me go. I have so many things to see and do. You must not tie yourself to me with tears. Be happy that I had so many years. I gave you my love. You can only guess how much you gave me in happiness. I thank you for the love you each have shown, but now it's time I travel on alone. And then, when you must come this way alone – I'll greet you with a smile and say "Welcome Home". Amen.