



Beta Sigma Phi EXEMPLAR DEGREE RITUAL

Instructions: *The Ritual Table is covered with a white cloth reaching the floor. A vase of yellow roses in the exact number that there are candidates for conferment is placed in the center, and the same number of tall white tapers in white and gold individual holders are arranged in a semi-circle across the table, back of the flowers.*

The pins are arranged across the front of the table. Other decorations and appointments of the room should be in white and gold.

Members who have received the Ritual of Jewels Degree are eligible to witness the ceremony along with guest Exemplars, until the candidates are pronounced Exemplars.

The Officiant is one of the candidates, or a guest Exemplar selected by the chapter. When the ceremony begins the room is in total darkness. While the "Song of Friendship" is being played softly, the officiating officer leads the candidates in and places them in a semi-circle in front of the table, then takes her place behind the table, strikes a match and lights all the candles on the table. As the last candle is lighted, she reads:

Out of the darkness came the light. It shineth and shall shine in our hearts forever.

A Beta Sigma Phi song is now played softly on the piano. Upon hearing the music the guest Exemplars and Ritual of Jewels members of the chapter conferring the Degree come into the room in single file carrying lighted white candles.

The Exemplar guests stand in a row or rows back of the Officiant.

The chapter members form a semi-circle back of the candidates, holding their candles for the candidate to read by.

The Officiant continues:

Dearly Beloved: We are gathered together to celebrate, by beautiful observance, an honor conferred upon us, a trust affirmed, and an obligation thoughtfully premeditated and individually elected.

The Officiant now presents a copy of the Ritual to each candidate, resumes her place behind the Ritual Table and reads:

We, as members of Beta Sigma Phi, have been found worthy of the recognition and responsibility of that status of trust and honor known to us as the Exemplar Degree.

Diotima, the Wise Woman of Mantinea, instructs us, "Keep your observances beautiful and as such your lives will become beautiful."

In proclamation of these things you will now join me in the responsive reading of our Ritual found on page 8 in the Ritual book you now hold.

Officiant reads: Together we have attained the first great lesson of our sisterhood — the lesson of Love — through Life, Learning and Friendship.

Candidates respond: Together we have followed the great Torch — the red ray of Courage, the yellow ray of Vision, the blue ray of Humility, the orange ray of Loyalty, the green ray of Fellowship and the violet ray of Service.

Officiant: Together we have learned to translate into Life, as we found it traced in our hearts, a pattern of loveliness in Conduct, Expression and Purpose.

Candidate: Together we have sought to make of Life a masterpiece of Love and Truth, through renunciation of selfishness and through our own and individual concept of the Beautiful.

Officiant: Together we have learned that Beauty is a way of Seeing, a way of Thinking, a way of Feeling — and altogether a way of Being. In its Light we have found that radiance of Truth, the glory of Love, and infinity of Spirit.

Candidates: In our encounter with the Beautiful we have learned to speak out our own rapture, our own wonder and to stand before the vision of our own ideas and exclaim; "I, too, am an artist."

Officiant: Together we have found innumeral Paths to Loveliness. The splendor of great design, the magic of color, the grandeur of orchestral thunder, the solemnity of carven stone — and these we have learned to recognize as our own Splendors, our own Grandeurs and our own Solemnities.

Candidates: Together we have learned the unity underlying all arts, and have learned to become ourselves a part of that unity.

Officiant: Together we have sought our heritage of Happiness, and found its promise affirmative and blessed, assurant of our ultimate desire — the Perfect.

Candidates: Together we have learned to measure the force of a soul by its capacity for joy. We have learned how the great golden dream of happiness comes true and gives to Life and to our universe profound meaning, a value transcending valuation.

Officiant: Together we have found that the good life is an expression of the dynamics of the universe toward Love.

All Together: Together we have learned the lesson of the Light, transcendent Light, intangible but inescapable, indwelling, unresting; energizing Life and directing Love the cardinal forces of Reality.

Officiant: All this we have attained together, and by this attainment have conferred each upon ourself, the honor of being known henceforth as one who exemplifies the highest purposes of Beta Sigma Phi.

All Together: Together we go forward toward that Light which is the symbol of pure Being, Ineffable and Uncreated, above Intellection and known only through Love.

Officiant: Together we go forward to an obligation self-imposed and joyously accepted.

Candidates: Together we go forward to make our gift to Life, each in her individual way, knowing that under the law of Love, to cease to Give is to cease to Live.

Officiant: In this knowledge we accept the symbols and insignia of our Exemplar Degree: the colors white and gold, the pin with its supreme gem of Light, and from our Sisterhood, the Certificate of work well done and worth attained.

Come forward as your name is called and receive this pin in exchange for your Ritual of Jewels Pin which you have worn so worthy.

Reads names of candidates and each one, as her name is read, goes to the Ritual Table and receives the Exemplar Pin, then returns to her place in the circle.

Officiant: Be ye informed of the significance of this pin, emblem of our Exemplar Degree.

Again we accept the great Phi, signifying the golden circle of our friendship.

Again we accept the Beta and Sigma, symbols of Life and Learning.

Again we accept the six pearls, reflecting the six rays of Beauty which together compose the spectrum of the white Light of Love and Loveliness.

Anew we received the glowing Torch, its flame now purified and gleaming with the brilliance of earth's most precious gem.

Accept this gem for those things it signifies within the Self. Among the ancients and diamond was revered as bestowing Fortitude and Victory. Let us so regard it.

Among the modern it is treasured as a Jewel, and useful in the arts and industry. Let us to treasure it.

Most valuable of gems, its Beauty still is enhanced by polishing and shaping. This polishing and shaping is a slow work perfected in long time, and requiring skill and unremitting patience.

This jewel has been called a Fragment of Heaven.

Its brilliancy and beauty is in the reflection of the Light that reaches it through its many planes.

So shall our Lives be shaped by fortitude and usefulness toward victory.

And do shall we, through polishing the many facets of our being, reflect the radiance of the Light of Love.

And now, with gratitude for the honor conferred upon us, and in glad appreciation of these things, shall we accept the Certificate of our Sisterhood, which nominates us to Exemplify, henceforward, in our world the highest purposes of Beta Sigma Phi?

All Together: We shall.

Officiant now presents to each candidate her certificate, reading the name inscribed. As her name is read the candidate comes forward to receive her degree and then returns to the circle.

Officiant: Henceforth we shall be known as Exemplars of Beta Sigma Phi.

Again a Beta Sigma Phi song is played softly, while all guests who are not Exemplars file out of the room.

Candidates remain standing as before.

Officiant now moves each lighted candle to the front edge of the table and reads:

Come forward now into the light which represents the Gem of Light within yourself, the diamond radiance of eternal love; and standing there, let each pray in her own way that as the planets are guided in their eternal paths, we may be guided that we may exemplify the high ideals of our sisterhood; that we may be helped to worship by honest work, by willing service, by kind words, and useful deeds; that we may be helped to find life good by doing something to make it good, by advancing with strong heart, firm step, and generous hand.

That we may be taught pure ideals, true thoughts, and noble endeavor — trusting when we cannot prove and proving when we cannot trust. If our thoughts are dark, may the

glory of the stars shine in upon them; and if they be bright, make them to light the pathway of our fellowmen.

May there be added to the beauty of the world about us a finer spiritual beauty within our souls. If there be anything unlovely in our life, may we be helped to seek beneath it for the hidden beauty and this bring to light. May the light shine through us to those that live in the shadow, and so fill us with radiant spirit that we may be a light unto our neighbor's feet and light unto his path. Let us ask that all the ecstatic and abounding Life of the Universe, which is older than antiquity, help us find a new life at every dawn. Let us ask to have generated in us a more abundant life, unquenchable and ever lovely. Let us ask that we may be granted more of life, light, and love, for in receiving these we receive all. Let us beseech that we may be Exemplars in TRUTH. Amen

Candidates come close to table and stand before a candle.

Officiant: So let thy light shine as thou dost go forth to again join thy sisters.

Candidates file out of the room two at a time, if there is a sufficient number, starting with those directly in front of the Ritual Table. Otherwise they leave the room in single file. "Within Our Hearts" may be played softly.