

OUR OBLIGATION
A Ceremony for Obligation Night

Worthy Matron:

O-ur Obligation

B-inds us in

L-ove,

I-nterest

G-oodwill and

A-mbition to a

T-rue

I-nterpretation of the

O-bservance of

N-eighborliness.

Sisters and Brothers, let us study our Obligation and see what truths we may learn from such study, and what connection it has with our other work. Sister Adah, tell me, has your color any bearing upon our Obligation?

Adah: Worthy Matron, blue is a symbol of fidelity and fidelity means faithfulness in the discharge of duty or of Obligation. It also means a hearty allegiance to those to whom we are bound in affection or honor. It was Adah's fidelity to her convictions of right and duty that preserved her father's honor. She was true to her obligation.

Worthy Matron: Thank you, Sister Adah, and may we all be as faithful to OUR obligation. Sister Ruth, what connection does your color have with our Obligation?

Ruth: Yellow is a symbol of constancy and constancy means steadiness of purpose, faithfulness in service, loyalty in friendship. Ruth was constant in her devotion to Naomi, faithful to her Obligation and would not be turned back from her purpose.

Worthy Matron: We are grateful for this lesson, my sister, and may we all be as loyal and constant as Ruth. Sister Esther, what does your color symbolize?

Esther: White is a symbol of purity. Esther's life was pure and clean, and above the tongue of reproach. She was faithful to her Obligation to her people and the king readily forgave her for transgressing his commands. Let us be faithful in our duty toward each other.

Worthy Matron: Sister Esther, your lesson should help us to be faithful to all moral Obligations. Sister Martha, has your color any lesson in Obligation?

Martha: Green is Nature's symbol of immortality, which means life after death, or Eternal Life. Martha felt her obligation to her home and was true to the varied duties imposed by her sisterly devotion. Her faith in Jesus and the truth of His word brought the reward of her brother's resurrection. Her lesson is Hope of Immortal Life and teaches that the deepest sorrow may be relieved by a trustful faith in God.

Worthy Matron: May we have the trustful faith of Martha and realize her hope of Immortal Life. Sister Electa, does your color teach of Obligation?

Electa: Red is the symbol of fervency, which means keenness, or intensity of feeling; an ardent love. The intensity of Electa's devotion to her Christian religion, the keenness of her sense of Obligation to her neighbors and her God, all show her desire to obey the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Worthy Matron: By such love we will realize our Obligation to our neighbors and our friends. Sister Associate Matron, what does our Obligation teach? Has it any particular message for you?

Associate Matron: Our Obligation comprises seven promises given in the "Presence of Almighty God and these witnesses." The first promises loyalty to the Order by never revealing any of its secrets.

Worthy Matron: Let us remember to be loyal. Brother Associate Patron, what does our obligation teach you?

Associate Patron: Our Order is emblematic of humanity and our Chapter a human family. The transactions of our Chapter should be as carefully guarded as we would watch over, defend and protect the members of our own family.

Worthy Matron: Sister Conductress, what do you learn from our Obligation?

Conductress: Obedience is the great law of life. As we obey the admonitions of our parents, the commands of the Bible and the rules of life, just so will we obey the laws of our Grand Jurisdiction and the by-laws of our own Chapter.

Worthy Matron: Sister Associate Conductress, has our Obligation a lesson for you?

Associate Conductress: As truly as we are loyal to the members of our own family, so will we be loyal to our fraternal sisters and brothers, giving to them the love, loyalty, and friendship that we expect from others.

Worthy Matron: Sister Secretary, what can you say of our Obligation?

Secretary: As I keep a record of the proceedings of the Chapter, so does our Heavenly Father keep a record of our words and deeds. Each word we speak has a thousand echoes, each act as many imitators. We should guard our tongues and actions and neither say nor do any unkind or unjust thing toward a sister or brother.

Worthy Matron: sister Treasurer, what message has our Obligation for you?

Treasurer: As carefully as I guard the finances of this Chapter, just so must we cherish and defend the character of all who are members of the Order.

Worthy Matron: “To all these things we promise faithful obedience when taking our Obligation. Sisters and Brothers, let us form a circle around our sacred Altar and, on bended knee, once more assume our Obligation. Worthy Patron, will you teach us anew the Obligation of our Order?”

Worthy Matron and other officers form a circle around the altar. If sideliners are present, have them join this circle. If too many are present, ask the sideliners to make a larger circle outside the circle of officers. Chaplain assumes his/her place of prayer. All kneel (if able) and joining hands repeat the obligation after the Worthy Patron, who remains in his station in the East. At the close of the obligation, the Chaplain will offer this prayer:]

Chaplain: Gracious and omnipotent God, author of all goodness and mercy, bless, we beseech thee, each member here assembled and help us to remember our vows and be loyal to each other and to Thee, our God. As we go forth into the world may we be true to the obligation we have assumed and better Christians for this service. Smile upon us as we part and guide us every by the right hand of Thy power. All of which we ask in Jesus’ name. Amen.

All: So may it ever be.

All rise and return to their seats singing “My Faith Looks up to Thee.”