

The following is a suggested POW/MIA Remembrance Service to be used at banquets, luncheons or memorial gathering of The American Legion. This service can be used as scripted, or modified to meet the specific needs of your function/Post.

The Master of Ceremonies script for this service can also be found in Section 3 of The American Legion Officers Guide and Manual of Ceremonies.
POW/MIA Remembrance Service

All Those who have served, and those currently serving in the uniformed services of the United States, are ever mindful that the sweetness of enduring peace has always been tainted by the bitterness of personal sacrifice. We are compelled to never forget that while we enjoy our daily pleasures, there are others who have endured and may still be enduring the agonies of pain, deprivation and imprisonment.

Before we begin our activities, we pause to recognize our Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action.

We call your attention to this small table which occupies a place of dignity and honor. It is set for one symbolizing the fact that members of our armed forces are missing from our ranks.

They are referred to as POWs and MIAs.

We call them comrades. They are unable to be with their loved ones and families, so we join together to pay humble tribute to them, and to bear witness to their continued suppressors.

The table is small, symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner, alone against his or her suppressors.

The table cloth is white, symbolic of the purity of their intentions to respond to their Countrys call to arms.

The single rose in the vase, signifies the blood they may have shed in sacrifice to ensure the freedom of our beloved United States of America. This rose also reminds us of the family and friends of our missing comrades who keep faith, while awaiting their return.

The red ribbon on the vase represents the red ribbons worn on the lapels of the thousands who demand, with unyielding determination, a proper account of our comrades who are not among us.

A slice of lemon on the plate reminds us of their bitter fate.

The salt sprinkled on the plate reminds us of the countless fallen tears of families as they wait.

The glass is inverted; they can not toast with us at this time.

The chair is empty. They are NOT here.

The candle is reminiscent of the light of hope which lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors, to the open arms of a grateful nation.

The American Flag reminds us that many of them may never return - and have paid the supreme sacrifice to insure our freedom

Let us pray to the Supreme Commander that all of our comrades will soon be back within our ranks.

Let us remember - and never forget their sacrifice.

May God forever watch over them and protect them and their families.