

WHAT IS A FUNERAL RITE or RITUAL? AND A MEMORIAL?

The “*Online Etymology Dictionary*” said that the word rite is used still the 14 century and it came from the Latin word *ritus*. It is used with the meaning of "religious observance or ceremony, custom, usage,". From this word derives ritual. It came from the Latin “rituals”. The word "ritual" is first recorded in English in 1570, and came into use in the 1600s to mean "the prescribed order of performing religious services". In general a ritual "is a sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in a sequestered place, and performed according to set sequence."

Alan D. Wolfelt in his article “Why Is the Funeral Ritual Important?”, said that rituals are symbolic activities too. But he added that they help the people, together with our families and friends, to express our **deepest** thoughts and feelings about life's most events. Baptism, Birthday and Weddings are examples of rituals, they are public and private celebrations that **coinvolgono** all the family or the society.

In this way we can consider the funeral ritual, too, a public, traditional and symbolic means of expressing our beliefs, thoughts and feelings about the death of someone loved. For example we can think about the ritual celebrated in honor of all the soldiers that lost their life in the war. The funeral ceremony helped the mothers of these soldiers to acknowledge the reality of the death, gave them testimony to the life of the deceased, supported them, and offered continuity and hope. But this still happens today. The people's feelings about the death of another one, doesn't change.

While the word Memorial, used after the 14c, means "fame, renown, reputation," also "commemorative gesture, monument, or rite;". In general, "something by which the memory of a person, thing, or event is preserved". It derives from Old French memorial "record, report," and directly from Late Latin *memoriale* "a memorial". In particular the war memorial is a building, monument, statue or other edifice to celebrate a war or victory, or to commemorate those who died or were injured in a war.

WHAT IS ITS MEANING?

The funeral rite, as Alan D. Wolfelt writes in his article, helps meet the six reconciliation needs of mourning. These needs are different from each other but have a common point: it helps people to reflect about their conditions, and take these people to the conclusion that the death is a part of life, in my opinion a negative part of life. For Alan these six needs are: 1. acknowledge the reality of the death, 2. move toward the pain of the loss, 3. remember the person who died, 4. develop a new self-identity, 5. search for meaning, and 6. receive ongoing support from others.

During the First World War, a lot of soldiers came from different nations and lost their lives. To celebrate these people and the victory that they helped to conquer, most of the cities in the countries involved in the conflict erected memorials. Most of these memorials were built in smaller villages and towns and they presented a list of the names of each local soldier who had been killed in addition to their names being recorded on military headstones. War memorials often serve as a meeting place for commemorative services. There were built and designed different kinds of memorials. Tank monument, The Cenotaph, Cemeteries and Battlefields are examples.