

## MORTGAGE BURNING CEREMONY B.P.O. ELKS OF CANADA

*(A check should be made to see if the original copy of the mortgage must be retained. If so, a photocopy may be made and burned in this symbolic ceremony.)*

**EXALTED RULER:** "Brothers, Sisters, Ladies and friends, we are about to perform the ceremony of burning the mortgage on our building. Brother/Sister Chaplain, you will offer an invocation."

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**CHAPLAIN:** "Oh Great Exalted Ruler of the Universe, we come before Thee at this time to render thanks for the manifold blessings that have been bestowed upon this Lodge in the \_\_\_\_ years that it has been in existence. May we not forget, in our zeal and enthusiasm to acclaim our material success, that our chief objectives must always be the basic principles of our Order – Charity, Justice, Love and Fidelity. May we find in our Lodge Home, now free from debt, increased opportunities to achieve these ends. Amen." *(All repeat Amen.)*

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**EXALTED RULER:** "Brother/Sister Esquire, you will prepare the Altar for our ceremony and then light the ceremonial torch."

*(Esquire proceeds to the Altar and places four separate portions of the mortgage paper in separate corners of a platter which is suitable for this purpose. Then returns to station and lights the torch. Lights are extinguished or dimmed as seems most suitable in local circumstances. Exalted Ruler raps gavel three times to bring assembly to its feet.)*

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**EXALTED RULER:** "The Knights, the Esquire and I will now assume our positions at the Altar."

*(The four Chair Officers take up positions about 5 feet from the Altar directly between their stations and the Altar. The Esquire takes up a position a short distance from the Lecturing Knight. During the ceremony, as each Officer burns their portion of the mortgage and gives their charge, steps back to position 5 feet from the Altar and hands the torch to the Esquire, who then takes it to the next Officer.)*

**LECTURING KNIGHT:** "As I touch the torch to this evidence of the indebtedness against our Lodge Home, may it signify the fire of Love that should burn in the heart of every Elk."

**LOYAL KNIGHT:** "As I touch this torch to the mortgage against our Lodge Home, may we hope that the torch of Justice will continue to burn brightly and that it will ever guide the decisions and deliberations of every member."

**LEADING KNIGHT**: "As we have removed the debt against our Lodge Home and as I apply this torch to destroy the visible evidence of our past indebtedness, may this flame be symbolic of the spirit of Charity which burns brightly and eternally in every Elks Lodge."

**EXALTED RULER**: "As I apply this torch to the last traces of evidence of former debt against our Lodge Home, may we remember with deep gratitude the parts played by the many departed members of our Lodge. Our success today depends to a large degree on the work, the planning and the devoted interest of those who have answered that last great roll call. May we, the living, find renewed inspiration in this ceremony to strengthen our principles of Charity, Justice, Love and Fidelity and to continue to work toward our goal, the Brotherhood of Man. We will now resume our stations."

*(The Knights and the Exalted Ruler resume their stations while the Esquire remains at the Altar to complete duties. Then extinguishes the torch while the others are returning to their stations. Lights are returned. Exalted Ruler seats assembly.)*

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**EXALTED RULER**: "Brother/Sister Esquire, you will now place in this envelope the ashes of the mortgage and turn it over to the Secretary so that it may remain in the archives of Lodge."

*(Esquire completes these duties and returns to station.)*

**EXALTED RULER**: " Elks, Ladies of the Royal Purple and friends, may we now conclude this ceremony rejoicing in our freedom from debt against our Lodge Home and may we hope to gain even greater success in all our endeavors in the days to be."

*(Raps Gavel once to end ceremony.)*

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