POW/MIA Table Ceremony

Moderator:

As you entered the dining area, you may have noticed a table at the front, raised to call your attention to its purpose -- it is reserved to honor our missing loved ones [or missing comrades in arms, for veterans].

Set for six, the empty places represent Americans still [our men] missing from each of the five services -- Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard – and civilians. This Honors Ceremony symbolizes that they are with us, here in spirit.

Some [here] in this room were very young when they were sent into combat; however, all Americans should never forget the brave men and women who answered our nation's call [to serve] and served the cause of freedom in a special way.

I would like to ask you to stand, and remain standing for a moment of silent prayer, as the Honor Guard places the five service covers and a civilian cap on each empty plate.

Honor Guard:

(In silence or with dignified, quiet music as background, the Honor Guard moves into position around the table and simultaneously places the covers of the Army, Navy,
Moderator:

Please be seated ....... I would like to explain the meaning of the items on this special table.

The table is round -- to show our everlasting concern for our missing men.
• Remember

The tablecloth is white -- symbolizing the purity of their motives when answering the call to duty.
• Remember

The single red rose, displayed in a vase, reminds us of the life of each of the missing, and their loved ones and friends of these Americans who keep the faith, awaiting answers.
• Remember

The vase is tied with a red ribbon, symbol of our continued determination to account for our missing.
• Remember

A slice of lemon on the bread plate is to remind us of the bitter fate of those captured and missing in a foreign land.
• Remember

A pinch of salt symbolizes the tears endured by those missing and their families who seek answers.
• Remember

The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain those lost from our country, founded as one nation under God.
• Remember

The glass is inverted -- to symbolize their inability to share this evening's [morning’s/day's] toast.
The chairs are empty -- they are missing.
• Remember

Let us now raise our water glasses in a toast to honor America's POW/MIAs and to the success of our efforts to account for them.

TABLE SET UP:

1. A small, round bistro table
2. White tablecloth
3. Single place setting, preferably all white
4. Wine glass - inverted
5. Salt shaker
6. Slice of lemon on bread plate with a pile of spilled salt
7. Small bud vase with a single stem red rose
8. RED ribbon tied around the vase
9. Candle - lit
10. Empty chair