

# POW/MIA Table Ceremony



## (Joint Ceremony)

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### **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,*

*table setting. The Honor Guard then departs.)*

**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**