

Beta Sigma Phi PLEDGE RITUAL

Instructions: A long table is covered with a white cloth reaching to the floor. In the center is a vase filled with the flower of the Sorority — yellow roses. The Book of Ritual lies on the table back of the flowers. On each side are candle holders filled with black candles or white candles may be used. They are lighted before the candidates are admitted. Pins for each candidate and yellow candles for each candidate are placed on the table in separate small trays, as shown in the Pledge Ritual picture.

The President stands behind the table, with any Honorary Members or International representatives on either side.

The members, standing in two rows the width of the Ritual Table apart, are facing each other.

Candidates are in formal or dressy dress. If possible, pledges should not be permitted to see or enter the Ritual Room until conducted in for the ceremony. The Vice-President and Treasurer, or any two appointees, alternately attend the door, admitting and conducting candidates, one or two at a time, to the Ritual Table and from there to the correct place in the semi-circle being formed inside of the two rows of members. Soft music may be played while the candidates are begin conducted into the room.

The Director and Sponsor are conducted to the Ritual Table first and, after they have been formally admitted, they are led to the chairs at the front corners of the table and seated facing toward each other slightly and into the circle that is to be formed by members and candidates.

Please Note: Asterisks have been inserted to suggest places to pause for breath. By practicing, you can determine which places are best for you.

Before the admittance of each two candidates the **Officiant speaks:** Who seeks admittance into Beta Sigma Phi?

Door attendant replies: Friends we have invited to join us.

Officiant: Let them enter.

The candidates are then brought into the room and stationed before the Ritual Table. The attendant remains standing just a step back of the candidate.

My Friends, we are here to explain to you * those things which will enable you to truly become a part * of the sisterhood of Beta Sigma Phi.*

Long ago, in the golden days of Greece, * a woman named Diotima was known * as the wise woman of Mantinea. * She was said to be the teacher of Socrates. * It was she who taught the great philosopher the meaning and importance of love. * She can serve as our guide also. * Through her touch the spirit of immortal womanhood * which runs unbroken through all time. *

A story is told of a young woman * starting her search for wisdom. * She felt that she was wandering alone in the dark, * but found that she was not alone. * Diotima was with her, * guiding her and teaching her. * This is her story. *

As they walked together, * the young woman saw a light moving ahead of them. * She saw that it was a torch, * and they were following it. *

“What is the torch?” she asked the wise woman. *

"It is called Learning," she answered. *

"Why does it move ahead as we move toward it?" *

"So you and I may find our way through darkness." *

"But where does it lead?" she persisted. *

Diotima did not answer. *

The answer came slow and measured. * "The torch was lighted from a great fire. * Some call it Truth. * Some call it Beauty. * Some call it Love. * Those who follow it will learn all of these." *

"Will we reach the flame?"

"You will enter its light, * but you will never touch the flame. * Immortal spirit of womanhood is in every mortal woman. * It is part of her self. * But the ideal of Truth, Beauty, and Love * which are represented by the flame * are always beyond the individual." *

"Why are those we meet not also following the torch * and seeking the light, * instead of wandering about in different ways?" *

"Because they cannot see the light. * They do not have the torch * such as I now give to you, * because you have been found worthy." * and so, Diotima handed to her the torch, * just as I now had it on to you. *

Follow the light of learning, * it will guide you well. * Though your heart may become faint * and your footsteps may falter, * keep moving forward. * Patience overcomes all things, * but emotions can mislead us. * Their ways are clouded by sensation. *

Know that you have the right to be useful. * To be a Beta Sigma Phi * is to be worthy to follow the light of the torch. * You must bear within you * the spirit of immortal womanhood * of which the torch is a symbol. * You shall be kind, helpful, and friendly * to your fellow beings. You shall be steadfast and faithful * in the pursuit of the high ideal. * You shall give the best that is in you * to your work, * to your life, * and to your world. * To be a Beta Sigma Phi is to renounce selfishness * and to assume a queenly quest. *

The fellowship of Beta Sigma Phi * and the first great lesson of its sisterhood * is love. * It is love which springs between women * and united by the same great ideals. * During the weeks ahead, * there shall be lighted from this torch * six others, six great perfections of your inner self, * six ways of love. Our love shall be not only for living creatures, * but that all embracing love * for souls we never saw. * Their messages have come down to us * in works of art, music, and architecture. * In sculpture, books, pictures, * and dance we meet them. * All the avenues of beauty and glory * to which we may open our hearts * and our minds in gratitude and growth. *

That love shall embrace ideas * as well as persons. * It shall grace both the heart * and the mind through constructive action * and service. *

That love shall make us slow to expose a fault * and eager to find and to believe * the good and true. * It shall cause us to share * in whatever of good or sorrow * may come to any one of us. *

That love imparts to the body * and to the spirit * the full beauty and perfection * of which they are capable. *

It shall be that love * which enables us not only * to dream of noble things, * but to achieve noble things. *

And it crowns a woman in her queenly quest, * enriching most who gives most. *

The purpose of fellowship shall be * to advance each one of us in the understanding * of the good and of the true and the beautiful, * through appreciation of the arts, * and to enable each one of us * to make of her own life, * both in thought and conduct, * a work of art, * a masterpiece of beauty. *

Candidates for Admission Into Beta Sigma Phi, * are you willing to carry this torch? * If so answer, "I am." *

Do you pledge yourselves to seek and follow the light of learning? If so, answer, "I do." *

Then repeat after me these words. * "I solemnly promise to uphold * the honor and the aims * of Beta Sigma Phi * as I know them." *

I now inform you of the significance of this pin. * The great Phi is the golden circle of friendship. * We are bound in a union of unbroken strength. * Beta signifies life, * the gleam of time between two eternities. * The shaping of our own lives * is our own work. * It is a thing of beauty * or a thing of shame * as we ourselves make it. *

The Sigma signifies learning. * It is wealth to the poor, * honor to the rich, * aid to the young, * support and comfort to the aged. * Learning, if rightly applied, * makes a woman cheerful and useful, * it is an ornament in prosperity, * a refuge in adversity, * and an entertainment at all times. * It cheers in solitude * and gives moderation and wisdom. *

The Beta and Sigma rest on a background of black, * signifying the death of selfishness, * for in loyal and loving service to others, * selfishness is forgotten. * The flaming torch is the light of learning, * a guide, * meaning that you are guided

by the light of learning * and are yourself a guide to others. *
She who seeks more light will always find it * and she is one
of the few happy mortals * in every point of time. *

The yellow rose is the flower of this organization, * signify-
ing in its purity and freshness * the wholesomeness of our
undertaking.

The torch is repeated in the great crest. * Here too, is an
ancient lamp of knowledge * and a book signifying the
intellectual * and literary attributes * of our organization. *
The Latin motto, * Vita, Scientia, Amicitia, * repeats the
purpose of the organization, * life, learning, and friendship.
* Wherever you see this pin * or this crest, * is one member
whispering the words Beta Sigma Phi. * If the wearer is a
sister, * the answer will be, * I am your sister. The handclasp
shall follow. *

*At the Ritual Table, Officiant shows handclasp by giving
it to the assistant.*

Now that you know the ideals of our sisterhood, * is it still
your desire * to participate in Beta Sigma Phi? If so, answer,
"it is." *

This pin, the emblem of our sisterhood, * is placed upon you
now. * Let no shame nor taint of any kind, * come upon it. *
Treasure it and wear it with constancy. *

*Attendants collect the candles, pins the pins, and give
the handclasp with the test for membership.*

I now pronounce you a pledge of * _____ Chapter
of Beta Sigma Phi. *

DO NOT FORGET YOUR PROMISE.