

KIM SA-IN

*Translated from the Korean by Brother Anthony of Taizé
and Susan Hwang*

END OF MOURNING

After setting up the photo of the deceased,
piling up rice cake, meat, pancakes,
arranging the fruits according to category and color,
taking the lid off the rice, inserting the spoon,
tapping three times with the chopsticks,
reading the memorial prayer,

The seven-year-old chief mourner
bows and offers a cup of wine,
the haggard widow tearfully bows
and offers a cup of wine, the younger brother bows,
a few friends bow,
the youngest sister offers a cup of wine,
outside it's already dark,
misty rain heavy.

By now your flesh under the ground
must already have rotted a lot.
Off you go on your journey.
This is your last meal here,
eat your fill,
get drunk, then totter off
on your journey. Off you go.