

# FUNERAL LITURGY PLANNING GUIDE

ST. AGATHA PARISH—MILTON-QUINCY  
432 ADAMS STREET  
MILTON, MA 02186  
(617) 698 2439

St. Agatha Bereavement Minister: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dear Parishioners,

We would like to offer you our deepest condolences on the loss of your loved one. Please be assured that we are here to accompany you through the process of grieving the loss of your loved one and celebrating his or her life. To accompany you through this difficult time and to assist you in your planning, a bereavement minister will call you and to meet with you to offer prayers, guidance and support in planning of the Funeral Mass.

This booklet has been created to assist you in the preparation of the Funeral Liturgy. The Funeral Mass is a sacred time—an expression of faith that comforts and strengthens us as we grieve. The Funeral Mass offers an opportunity to express our love and prayers for the deceased, to hear the consoling words and the message of hope offered through our Catholic Faith, and it reminds us that in Jesus we have a promise of victory over death.

The thoughts and prayers of the St. Agatha Parish family are with you and your loved ones at this time. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of the priests at the parish office at (617) 698-2439, X100.

Peace be with you and your loved ones,

Fr. William Palardy  
Pastor

Fr. Jason Makos  
Parochial Vicar

## ORDER OF THE FUNERAL MASS

*In accordance with the directives for public Masses from the Archdiocese of Boston during the COVID-19 pandemic, the following directives are required: wear a mask at all times covering mouth and nose, maintain 6 feet physical distance, follow arrows for traffic flow unless directed otherwise, no congregational singing and no programs.*

### **Reception at the Church**

All attending the funeral will be led in by the funeral director. Keeping in mind social distancing requirements, you will be instructed where to sit. Once everyone is seated, the casket is brought into the church. The priest will then greet all present and sprinkle the casket with holy water as a reminder of our loved one's baptism. The casket is then covered with the white funeral pall, a reminder of baptism. The priest will then invite all to sit. This is the place for the Entrance Hymn.

### **Liturgy of the Word**

We listen first to a reading from the Old Testament followed by a Responsorial Psalm. The second reading comes from the New Testament followed by a Gospel reading proclaimed by the priest or deacon. You may choose the scripture readings from the suggestions accompanying this packet. Readings from sources other than scripture may be used outside of Mass, perhaps at the wake or cemetery.

You may invite family members or friends to proclaim one or both of the first two readings. However, this is an emotional time and people may find it difficult to read in public. A member of the parish would be happy to help as a reader at the funeral.

The General Intercessions (or Prayers of the Faithful) follow the priest's homily and may be read by someone you choose. Sample prayers are found in this packet. You may use them as written, combine some or write your own.

### **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

As we move into this part of the Mass, we prepare the altar and our gifts. The gifts of bread and wine to be consecrated are on the altar. At this time, there is a Preparation of the Gifts hymn.

### **Communion Rite**

The priest will give instructions at this time. If you will be receiving communion, please come down the side aisle and return to your seat by the center aisle. If someone is not prepared to receive communion, it is requested that they approach the altar with their arms crossed over their heart to receive a blessing. The Communion Hymn is sung here.

### **Final Commendation**

In prayer and song, we commend your loved one into the mercy of God. Incense is used as a sign of our prayers for the deceased person and his or her loved ones. When the priest is finished the prayers of commendation, the congregation will be dismissed starting from the rear of the church by the funeral director, row by row. The immediate family will be the last to leave the church. After everyone is dismissed from the church, the casket is brought out.

## FUNERAL MUSIC GUIDELINES

To aid you during this difficult time, our parish bereavement person will contact you and set up a time convenient for you and your loved ones to discuss the Funeral Liturgy and will help you plan the details of the Mass.

### **Funeral Music Guidelines**

The funeral liturgy celebrates the Paschal Mystery and the Christian belief in everlasting life. Music for funerals must be of a sacred nature and appropriate for Holy Mass; it must be of high standards and sound theology. Music may also provide consolation and comfort for those grieving the loss of a loved one.

With these guiding principles in mind, the music ministry at St. Agatha Parish has compiled a list of recommended sacred music selections for funeral liturgies. Those planning the funeral should choose one selection from each category, for a total of five selections. Sacred music requests other than those listed may be honored if they express the resurrection of Jesus and the hope of eternal life.

Finally, while secular and popular songs, and even non-liturgical or quasi-religious music may hold great meaning to the deceased and their loved ones, they are not to substitute for music of the funeral liturgy. Sometimes families choose to play these other meaningful selections at the funeral home during the wake, or at the committal service.

### **Funeral Musicians**

In accordance with Archdiocesan policy, the parish Music Director will arrange for parish music ministers to provide music for funerals. There are times, however, when families wish for another musician, such as a family member or friend, or a liturgical musician from outside the parish, to assist with music. These requests must be discussed with and approved by the Music Director in advance, with the understanding that any such musicians would provide one or two selections during the funeral. Parish music ministers will provide the majority of music for the funeral liturgy. In addition, recorded music is never permitted for funeral Masses.

For more information about funeral music guidelines, please see *Policy and Instruction on Ecclesiastical Funeral Rites*, Archdiocese of Boston, 2018.

## MUSIC SELECTIONS FOR THE FUNERAL MASS

*Please make one selection from each category.*

### Entrance Hymn

Amazing Grace  
Be Not Afraid  
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say  
Jerusalem, My Happy Home  
Lord of All Hopefulness\*  
O Breathe on Me, O Breath of God\*  
Precious Lord, Take My Hand  
The King of Love My Shepherd Is\*  
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy  
You Are Near

### Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 23 The Lord is my shepherd or  
Shepherd Me, O God  
Psalm 25 To you, O Lord  
Psalm 27 The Lord is my light  
Psalm 42 My soul is thirsting for  
the living God  
Psalm 63 My soul is thirsting for you,  
O Lord my God  
Psalm 103 The Lord is kind and merciful  
Psalm 116 I will walk before the Lord  
in the land of the living  
Psalm 122 Let us go rejoicing  
to the house of the Lord  
Psalm 130 With the Lord there is mercy  
Psalm 143 O Lord, hear my prayer

### Preparation of the Gifts

Ave Maria  
Center of My Life  
Eye Has Not Seen  
Hail Mary: Gentle Woman  
Here I Am, Lord  
I Have Loved You  
Like a Shepherd  
Make Me a Channel of Your Peace  
Only This I Want  
Shelter Me, O God  
Shepherd of My Heart  
We Walk By Faith

### Communion Hymn

Behold the Lamb  
Eat This Bread  
I Am the Bread of Life  
Lord, When You Came to the Seashore  
One Bread, One Body  
Take and Eat  
Taste and See  
Unless a Grain of Wheat  
We Are Many Parts  
We Remember  
You Satisfy the Hungry Heart

### Meditation (optional)

Go in Peace  
In You Do I Find My Reward  
Lady of Knock\*  
O Loving God\*  
Panis Angelicus  
Surely the Presence of the Lord  
*Any other selection from this page may be used  
for this optional selection, as well*

### Recessional Hymn

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus  
(may not be sung during Lent)  
For All the Saints  
(may not be sung during Lent)  
God of Day and God of Darkness\*  
Holy God, We Praise Thy Name  
How Great Thou Art  
I Know that My Redeemer Lives  
In Paradisum (chant)  
Irish Blessing\*  
Jesus, Remember Me  
Lift High the Cross  
May Holy Angels Lead You\*  
On Eagle's Wings  
Sing with All the Saints in Glory  
We Shall Rise Again  
Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones  
(may not be sung during Lent)

\*This song is a traditional Irish melody and/or text

**PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED**

**Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,**  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
May the souls of the faithful departed,  
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.  
Amen.

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**In your hands, O Lord,**  
we humbly entrust our brothers and sisters.  
In this life you embraced them with your  
tender love;  
deliver them now from every evil  
and bid them eternal rest.

The old order has passed away:  
welcome them into paradise,  
where there will be no sorrow,  
no weeping or pain,  
but fullness of peace and joy  
with your Son and the Holy Spirit  
forever and ever. AMEN

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**May the Angels lead you into paradise;**  
may the martyrs greet you at your arrival  
and lead you into the holy city, Jerusalem.

May the choir of Angels greet you and  
like Lazarus, who once was a poor man,  
may you have eternal rest.

**PRAYERS AND WORDS FOR THOSE  
IN MOURNING**

**Words of Consolation from the Scripture:**

“I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming  
down out of heaven from God, prepared as a  
bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I  
heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look!  
God’s dwelling place is now among the people,  
and he will dwell with them. They will be his  
people, and God himself will be with them and be  
their God. ‘He will wipe every tear from their  
eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning  
or crying or pain, for the old order of things has  
passed away.” (Revelation 21:2-4)

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**Words and Prayers of Consolation from the  
Catholic Faith**

...“we believe that all the ties of friendship and  
affection which knit us as one throughout our  
lives do not unravel with death.

Confident that God always remembers the good  
we have done and forgives our sins, let us pray,  
asking God to gather N. to himself.”

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It is a customary and charitable practice to  
remember your loved one’s passing at a Mass  
either one month or a few months after his/her  
passing. A yearly Mass of Remembrance can be  
celebrated for your loved one, please call our  
Rectory to make arrangements. (617) 698-2439.

*Please know you are always welcome here at St. Agatha Parish for Mass or you may call the  
rectory for information regarding Bereavement counseling and/or a support group.*



