

# Scripture Readings and Music Options For Funeral Masses

St Mary Parish  
313 Court Street  
Plymouth MA 02360

The entire St Mary parish family offers you our condolences on the death of your loved one. The coming days will present both sorrows and graces as you mourn your loved one and as you prepare to celebrate his or her funeral. We hope to assist you in this effort and to provide a dignified and beautiful Mass of Christian Burial for your loved one. Your involvement in this process will help to insure that the music and scripture options chosen will bring you the deepest sense of God's comfort.

## **What will you need to do?**

1. Choose two readings as specified in this booklet
2. Choose the Prayers of the Faithful
3. Decide if Words of Remembrance will be offered
4. Choose music in six categories of the Mass as indicated on the Funeral Selection Sheet

## **Who may be involved in the Funeral Mass?**

We invite and encourage you to ask family members and/or friends to participate in the following ways:

1. One person to read the First Reading.
2. One person to read the Second Reading
3. One person to read the Prayer of the Faithful
4. Two or three people to present the Gifts of Bread and Wine
5. If you choose to offer Words of Remembrance, only one person may do so.

Please read through the readings and music options in this booklet. Deacon Gene Stenstrom will contact you to set up a meeting in the Church to plan the liturgy and answer any questions you may have. At the meeting, the Deacon will assist you with completing the Selection Form indicating your choices for Readings, Prayers of the Faithful and Music options. The completed Selection Sheet and other pertinent information will then be given to the Celebrant prior to the funeral.

If you have any questions, please call the Parish Office at 508-746-0426.

## First Reading From the Old Testament (Choose One)

### A-1: 2 Maccabees 12:43-46

A reading from the Book of Maccabees

Judas, the ruler of Israel, took up a collection among all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice. In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death. But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin.

The word of the Lord.

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### A-2: Job 19: 1, 23-27a

A reading from the Book of Job

Job answered Bildad the Shuhite and said:  
Oh, would that my words were written down!  
    Would that they were inscribed in a record:  
That with an iron chisel and with lead  
    they were cut in the rock forever!  
But as for me, I know that my Vindicator lives,  
    and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust;  
Whom I myself shall see:  
    My own eyes, not another's, shall behold him;  
And from my flesh I shall see God;  
My inmost being is consumed with longing.

The word of the Lord.

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### A-3 (Long): Wisdom 3:1-9

A reading from the book of Wisdom

The souls of the just are in the hand of God  
    and no torment shall touch them.  
They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead;  
    and their passing away was thought an affliction  
    and their going forth from us utter destruction.  
But they are in peace.  
For if, in the eyes of men, indeed they be punished,  
    yet is their hope full of immortality;  
Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed,  
    because God tried them,  
    and found them worthy of himself.  
As gold in the furnace, he proved them,  
    and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.  
In the time of their visitation they shall shine,  
    and shall dart about as sparks through stubble;  
They shall judge nations and rule over peoples,  
    and the Lord shall be their King forever

*(A-3 Long Version – continued)*

Those who trust in him shall understand truth,  
and the faithful shall abide with him in love:  
Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones,  
    and his care is with his elect.

The word of the Lord.

### A-3 (Short): Wisdom 3:1-6,9

A reading from the book of Wisdom

The souls of the just are in the hand of God  
    and no torment shall touch them.  
They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead;  
    and their passing away was thought an affliction  
    and their going forth from us utter destruction.  
But they are in peace.  
For if, in the eyes of men, indeed they be punished,  
    yet is their hope full of immortality;  
Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed,  
    because God tried them,  
    and found them worthy of himself.  
As gold in the furnace, he proved them,  
    and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.  
Those who trust in him shall understand truth,  
    and the faithful shall abide with him in love:  
Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones,  
    and his care is with his elect.

The word of the Lord.

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### A-4: Wisdom 4:7-15

A reading from the book of Wisdom

The just man, though he die early,  
    shall be at rest.  
For the age that is honorable comes not  
    with the passing of time,  
    nor can it be measured in terms of years.  
Rather, understanding is the hoary crown for men,  
    and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age.  
He who pleased God was loved;  
    he who lived among sinners was transported -  
Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind  
    or deceit beguile his soul;  
For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right  
    and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind.  
Having become perfect in a short while,  
    he reached the fullness of a long career;  
    for his soul was pleasing to the Lord,  
    therefore he sped him out of the midst of wickedness.  
But the people saw and did not understand,  
    nor did they take this into account.

The word of the Lord.

### A-5: Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

On this mountain the lord of hosts  
    will provide for all peoples.  
On this mountain he will destroy  
    the veil that veils all peoples,  
The web that is woven over all nations;  
    he will destroy death forever.  
The Lord God will wipe away  
    the tears from all faces;  
The reproach of his people he will remove  
    from the whole earth; for the Lord has spoken.

On that day it will be said:  
“Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us!  
This is the Lord for whom we looked;  
let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!”

The word of the Lord.

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**A-6:** Lamentations 3:17-26

A reading from the book of Lamentations  
My soul is deprived of peace,  
I have forgotten what happiness is;  
I tell myself my future is lost,  
all that I hoped for from the LORD.  
The thought of my homeless poverty  
is wormwood and gall;  
Remembering it over and over  
leaves my soul downcast within me.  
But I will call this to mind,  
as my reason to have hope:  
The favors of the LORD are not exhausted,  
his mercies are not spent;  
They are renewed each morning,  
so great is his faithfulness.  
My portion is the LORD, says my soul;  
therefore will I hope in him.  
Good is the LORD to one who waits for him,  
to the soul that seeks him;  
It is good to hope in silence  
for the saving help of the LORD.

The word of the Lord.

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**A-7:** Daniel 12:1-3

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel  
In those days, I, Daniel, mourned  
and heard this word of the Lord:  
At that time there shall arise  
Michael, the great prince,  
guardian of your people;  
It shall be a time unsurpassed in distress  
since nations began until that time.  
At that time your people shall escape,  
everyone who is found written in the book.  
Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake;  
(A-7 - continued)  
Some shall live forever,  
others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace.  
But the wise shall shine brightly  
like the splendor of the firmament,  
And those who lead the many to justice  
shall be like the stars forever.

The word of the Lord.

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**Additional readings, A-8 through A-11, may be  
chosen during the Easter season only,  
(from Easter until Pentecost.)**

**A-8 (Long):** Acts 10:34-43  
(choice during the Easter Season only.)

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter proceeded to speak, saying:

“In truth, I see that God shows no partiality.  
Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly  
is acceptable to him.  
You know the word that he sent to the children of Israel  
as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is  
Lord of all,  
what has happened all over Judea,  
beginning in Galilee after the baptism  
that John preached,  
how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth  
with the Holy Spirit and power.  
He went about doing good  
and healing all those oppressed by the Devil,  
for God was with him.  
We are witnesses of all that he did  
both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.  
They put him to death by hanging him on a tree.  
This man God raised on the third day and granted  
that he be visible,  
not to all the people, but to us,  
the witnesses chosen by God in advance,  
who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.  
He commissioned us to preach to the people  
and testify that he is the one appointed by God  
as judge of the living and the dead.  
To him all the prophets bear witness,  
that everyone who believes in him  
will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

The word of the Lord.

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**A-8 (Short):** Acts 10:34-36, 42-43  
(choice during the Easter Season only.)

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter proceeded to speak, saying:

“In truth, I see that God shows no partiality.  
Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is  
acceptable to him.  
You know the word that he sent to the children of Israel  
as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is  
Lord of all.  
He commissioned us to preach to the people  
and testify that he is the one appointed by God  
as judge of the living and the dead.  
To him all the prophets bear witness,  
that everyone who believes in him  
will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

The word of the Lord.

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**A-9:** Revelation 14:13  
(choice during the Easter Season only.)

A reading from the book of Revelation

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say, “Write this:  
Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.”  
“Yes,” said the Spirit,  
“let them find rest from their labors,  
for their works accompany them.”

The word of the Lord.

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**A-10:** Revelation 20:11-21:1  
(choice during the Easter Season only.)

A reading from the book of Revelation

I, John, saw a large white throne  
and the one who was sitting on it.  
The earth and the sky fled from his presence  
and there was no place for them.  
I saw the dead, the great and the lowly,  
standing before the throne,  
and scrolls were opened.  
Then another scroll was opened, the book of life.  
The dead were judged according to their deeds,  
by what was written in the scrolls.  
The sea gave up its dead;  
then Death and Hades gave up their dead.  
All the dead were judged according to their deeds.  
Then Death and Hades were thrown into the pool of fire.  
(This pool of fire is the second death. )  
Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life  
was thrown into the pool of fire.  
  
Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.  
The former heaven and the former earth had passed away,  
and the sea was no more.  
  
The word of the Lord.

**A-11:** Revelation 21:1-5a, 6b-7  
(choice during the Easter Season only.)

A reading from the Book of Revelation

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth.  
The former heaven and the former earth had passed away,  
and the sea was no more.  
I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem,  
coming down out of heaven from God,  
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.  
I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,  
“Behold, God’s dwelling is with the human race.  
He will dwell with them and they will be his people  
and God himself will always be with them as their God.  
He will wipe away every tear from their eyes,  
and there shall be no more death or mourning,  
wailing or pain,  
for the old order has passed away.”  
  
The One who sat on the throne said,  
“Behold, I make all things new.  
I am the Alpha and the Omega,  
the beginning and the end.  
To the thirsty I will give a gift  
from the spring of life-giving water.  
The victor will inherit these gifts,  
and I shall be his God,  
and he will be my son.”  
  
The word of the Lord.

Second Reading From the New Testament  
(Choose One)

**B-1:** Romans 5:5-11

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For Christ, while we were still helpless, died at the appointed time for the ungodly. Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. How much more, then, since we are now justified by his Blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath. Indeed, if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, once reconciled, will we be saved by his life. Not only that, but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-2:** Romans 5:17-21

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

If, by the transgression of the one, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come to reign in life through the one Jesus Christ. In conclusion, just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so, through one righteous act, acquittal and life came to all. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of the one the many will be made righteous. The law entered in so that transgression might increase but, where sin increased, grace over flowed all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through justification for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-3 (Long):** Romans 6:3-9

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.

For if we have grown into union with him through a death like

*(B-3 Long - continued)*

his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection. We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin. For a dead person has been absolved from sin. If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-3 (Short):** Romans 6:3-4, 8-9

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.

If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-4:** Romans 8:14-23

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, *Abba*, "Father!" The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not if its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-5:** Romans 8: 31B-35, 37-39

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

If God is for us, who can be against us? He did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, will he not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?

No, in all these things, we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-6:** Romans 14:7-9, 10B-12

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:

No one lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why then do you judge your brother? Or you, why do you look down on your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written:

*As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.*

So then each of us shall give an accounting of himself to God.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-7 (long):** 1 Corinthians 15:20-28

A reading from the second letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead came also through man. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the Kingdom to his God and Father. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death, for "he subjected everything under his feet." But when it says that everything has been subjected, it is clear that it excludes the one who subjected everything to him. When everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-7 (short):** 1 Corinthians 15:20-23

A reading from the second letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead came also through man. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-8:** 1 Corinthians 15:51-57

A reading from the second letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For that which is corruptible must clothe itself with incorruptibility, and that which is mortal must clothe itself with immortality. And when this which is corruptible clothes itself with incorruptibility and this which is mortal clothes itself with immortality, then the word that is written shall come about:

*Death is swallowed up in victory.*

*Where, O death, is your victory?*

*Where, O death, is your sting?*

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-9:** 1 Corinthians 4:14-5:1

A reading from the second letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

We know that the One who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence.

Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God.

Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.

For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,

as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen;

For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed,

*(B9 Long – continued)*

we have a building from God,  
a dwelling not made with hands,  
eternal in heaven.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-10:** 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10

A reading from the second letter of Saint Paul to the  
Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be  
destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made  
with hands, eternal in heaven.

We are always courageous, although we know that while we  
are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we  
walk by faith, not by sight. Yet we are courageous, and we  
would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord.  
Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or  
away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of  
Christ, so that each may receive recompense, according to  
what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-11:** Philippians 3:20-21

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians

Brothers and sisters:

Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a  
savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body  
to conform with his glorified Body by the power that enables  
him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-12:** 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

A reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters,  
about those who have fallen asleep,  
so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope.  
For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God,  
through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep.  
Indeed, we tell you this, on the word of the Lord,  
that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the  
Lord,

will surely not precede those who have fallen asleep.  
For the Lord himself, with a word of command,  
with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God,  
will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise  
first.

Then we who are alive, who are left  
will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the  
Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord.  
Therefore, console one another with these words.

The word of the Lord.

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*(B 12 – continued)*

**B-13:** 2 Timothy 2:8-13

A reading from the second letter of Saint Paul to Timothy

Beloved:

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of  
David; such is my Gospel, for which I am suffering, even to  
the point of chains, like a criminal. But the word of God is not  
chained. Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of  
those who are chosen, so that they too may obtain the  
salvation that is in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory.

This saying is trustworthy:

If we have died with him  
we shall also live with him;  
If we persevere  
we shall also reign with him.  
But if we deny him  
he will deny us.  
If we are unfaithful  
he remains faithful,  
for he cannot deny himself.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-14:** 1 John 3:1-2

A reading from the first letter of Saint John

Beloved: See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we  
may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason  
the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not  
yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we  
shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who  
has this hope based on him makes himself pure, as he is pure.

The word of the Lord.

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**B-15:** 1 John 3:14-16

A reading from the first letter of St. John

Beloved:

We know that we have passed from death to life because we  
love our brothers. Whoever does not love remains in death.  
Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know  
that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him. The way  
we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so  
we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

The word of the Lord.

## Prayers of the Faithful

Below you will find suggestions for Prayers of the Faithful used at funerals. The first three intercessions are included in all funeral Masses. Please select two or three more intercessions in addition to the first three. You may modify these prayers to reflect your family's circumstances or to pray for any other intention that is important to your family at this time.

- (1) For (Name), who in baptism was given the pledge of eternal life, that he/she may now be admitted to the company of the saints.  
We pray to the Lord.
- (2) For our brother/sister (Name) who was nourished by the body of Christ, the bread of life, that he/she may be raised up on the last day. We pray to the Lord.
- (3) For our deceased relatives and friends, especially (insert specific names if desired), that they may share in eternal life with the resurrected Christ.  
We pray to the Lord.

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Additional options for the Prayer of the Faithful:

- (4) For those who have fallen asleep in the hope of rising again, that they may see God face to face. We pray to the Lord.
- (5) For the family and friends of our brother/sister (Name), that they may be consoled in their grief by the Lord, who wept at the death of his friend Lazarus. We pray to the Lord.
- (6) For all of us assembled here to worship in faith, that we may be gathered together again in God's kingdom. We pray to the Lord.
- (7) For all who bear the cross of suffering in mind or body, that they may know God's love through the care and concern of family and friends. We pray to the Lord.
- (8) For all who supported our family during (Name)'s illness, that they may know our gratitude and be blessed for their kindness. We pray to the Lord.
- (9) For all health care professionals who cared for (Name) during his/her illness (or later years), that they may be blessed for their kindness and compassion, and that they may know fulfillment in their vocations. We pray to the Lord.
- (10) For all teachers, that through their dedication and skill they may inspire in their students a love of learning so that they may achieve their God-given potential. We pray to the Lord.
- (11) For all military personnel, that God may protect them from all harm and bring them home to their families safely and soon. We pray to the Lord.
- (12) For all police officers (firefighters) who work to protect our communities and keep them safe, that God will bless them in their work and keep them safe from harm. We pray to the Lord.
- (13) For those here today, that our memory of (Name), whom we loved, inspires us with a renewed love for all our brothers and sisters. We pray to the Lord.
- (14) For all researchers who are working to develop cures for illnesses such as (name illness), that God may lead them to new breakthroughs that will help alleviate the suffering and extend quality of life of those who are ill. We pray to the Lord.

## *Thoughts and Guidelines*

The Catholic funeral liturgy *allows*, but does not *require*, one person to offer words of remembrance at a funeral Mass. Often, if the deceased is a parish member, the priest who is celebrating the Mass can include some personal references as part of the funeral homily. Family members can be very helpful in offering those remembrances when they are planning other aspects of the funeral Mass with a member of the parish staff.

Funerals can be very emotional and there is sometimes some confusion about the purpose of what words of remembrance are meant to be. Therefore, if words of remembrance are to be offered by someone other than the priest, we offer the following instructions:

1. Diocesan policy and the policy of St. March church is that there can only be ONE speaker for these words.
2. The words of remembrance must be submitted in writing by 3:00 pm on the day BEFORE the funeral Mass and must be approved by the priest-celebrant.
3. Words of Remembrance should last no more than 3-4 minutes, which normally is equal to two pages of typed text, double spaced.

We offer these guidelines for the following reasons:

Sometimes words of remembrance are confused with a eulogy. The funeral Mass should focus on faith and our hope that the deceased is now with God. This is not the time to give a biography of the deceased or to tell stories that may be humorous to some people but may not be relevant to a person's faith or in keeping with the religious tone of the Mass. Therefore:

1. Only one speaker is permitted. If more than one speaker is desired, or if the words are not suitable for a church setting, these words can be shared at the wake; at the cemetery; or at the gathering following the funeral Mass.
2. In our experience, the most meaningful words of remembrance are ones that are brief and heartfelt, thanking the people for their support and attendance at the funeral Mass and referring to the role faith and God played in the deceased person's life.

We know that funerals are very emotional, and acknowledge that in many cases, there is much that needs to be done in a short time prior to the funeral Mass. These guidelines are not intended to be a burden. We offer them in the hope that the funeral Mass will be a dignified occasion not only to express our love but also to call to mind the importance of faith at a time of pain and loss.

As you plan for a funeral at St. Mary church we respectfully ask that these instructions be observed.