

Funeral Guidelines at St. Joseph Catholic Church

General Teachings on the Rite of Catholic Funerals:

The Mass, the memorial of Christ's death and resurrection, is the principal celebration of the Christian funeral. (Order of Christian Funerals, paragraph 5)

The Dignity of Human Life and Catholic Teaching on Death

The Book of Genesis tells us that God created the human person in His own image and likeness. Therefore, Catholic tradition has always held the human person in high esteem. The Church teaches that we must treat each person with dignity because they are a child of God: reflecting to the world that divine reality.

Death does not end our relationship with God. Central to the Christian faith is the belief that God has destined the human family for eternal life. It is our prayer that God will bring the souls of the faithful departed into the eternal happiness of heaven: uniting heaven and earth in one great communion of saints.

While starkly real and total, death is "the vehicle of that final offering of self that calls for the supreme act of faith in the Lord of life" (Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites, Publication No. 5-033, USCC, Washington, DC). The death of Christ is the "prototype" for all human death. His act of self-giving is the basis for "the mystery of the redemption of the body" and the foundation of the Church's life. Death is not so much a finality as the "gateway" to a new life in the presence of the Triune God.

When faced with the reality of the death of a loved one, the Christian is unequivocally confronted with the mystery of life and death. On the one hand, the body recalls the deceased person's personal story of faith, their past relationships and their continued spiritual presence. On the other hand, it recalls that our human bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, destined for future glory at the resurrection of the dead.

It has long been the Christian tradition to extend physical and spiritual care to the sick and dying. Catholic hospitals, nursing homes and hospices developed primarily to care for the physical needs of the sick. They also developed to assist the dying to live their last moments of life with dignity and peace.

The Church's belief in the sacredness of the body and the resurrection of the dead has traditionally found expression in the care it takes to prepare the body of the deceased for burial. The prayers and rituals of the Catholic funeral rites affirm the Church's reverence for its deceased members.

All too often people say, "Funerals are for the living, not for the dead." For Catholics this statement is not complete, because within the Catholic funeral rites are opportunities to praise and thank God for the love and mercy He has shown to the deceased person. The Catholic

funeral rites are also moments when the community gathers to pray for the repose of the soul of the deceased and offer its consolation to the surviving family and friends.

Today, however, our society does not necessarily share the beliefs that shaped our Catholic funeral practices. It is common for people to combine an exaggerated sense of privacy, individualism, and economic issues with a denial of the reality of death. The result has been a tendency to shorten the period for mourning. Unfortunately, this approach to short circuit the grieving process is a real and tragic mistake. It is tragic because it deprives the bereaved of the emotional and spiritual support they need to get through this difficult time.

CATHOLIC FUNERALS

The Catholic funeral rites highlight several important beliefs and values that the Church affirms in its funeral practices. They include:

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- The sacredness of all human life;
- The dignity of the person;
- The resurrection of Jesus Christ, the first born of the dead, and of His faithful followers;
- Death is an occasion to comfort and embrace human mortality
- The respect that is to be shown for the bodies of the dead;
- The importance of remembering the dead and offering prayers for them;
- And the need for the Church to provide a Ministry of consolation to those who mourn.

The Catholic funeral rites should be viewed as a symphony with three distinct movements: the Vigil for the Deceased, the Funeral Mass or Liturgy, and the Committal Rite. Each flows into the other with the Mass being the principal celebration. The bereaved should consult the clergy or pastoral minister of their parish before they make any liturgical arrangements with the funeral director. This provides the opportunity to have a clear understanding of the meaning and significance of the funeral rites and it allows family members to participate in the rites themselves.

The Catholic Funeral Rites

1. **VIGIL SERVICE (WAKE).** The Vigil Service is usually conducted in the funeral home or in the parish church on the eve of the Funeral Mass. Here the faithful keeps watch with the family, remembering the deceased person's life, praying to the God of mercy, and finding strength in Christ's presence. The Vigil is a Scripture or Evening Prayer Service. The rosary, or part of the rosary, may be prayed as well, but not as a replacement of the Vigil. This service is often the first gathering of the faithful and friends with the family.

2. **FUNERAL MASS.** The tradition of the Church has always been the celebration of the Mass with the body present in the Church. Christians respect and honor the body of the dead, which in Baptism becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Funeral Mass includes the reception of the body, the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the Final Commendation and Farewell. Funeral Masses may now be celebrated in the presence of cremated remains.

3. RITE OF COMMITTAL. For the final disposition of the body, it is the ancient Christian custom to bury or entomb the bodies of the dead in a cemetery, which means a "resting place." The Rite of Committal is the conclusion of the funeral rites and may be celebrated beside the open grave or place of interment. Here the faithful express their hope that, with those who have gone before marked with the sign of faith, the deceased awaits the glory of the resurrection and passes into the welcoming company of those who see God face to face.

Special Concerns

CREMATION

The Church strongly prefers that the body of the deceased be present for the funeral rites since the presence of the body clearly recalls the life and death of the person. It is the Church's recommendation that if cremation of the body is to take place, it occurs following the Funeral Mass. However, if cremation takes place immediately after death, the Church now permits the cremated remains to be brought into church for the celebration of the funeral liturgy, including the Eucharist.

FINAL DISPOSITION OF THE BODY OR CREMATED REMAINS

Following the celebration of the Funeral Mass, the earthly remains of the deceased are to be reverently buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum. The Church stresses that the cremated remains of the deceased are to be treated with the same respect given to the body, namely, they too should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium. The practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air, on the ground, or of keeping them in the home of a relative or a friend is **NOT** the reverent disposition that the Church requires.

Source:http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20160815_ad-resurgendum-cum-christo_en.htm

GUIDELINES FOR FUNERAL MASS/SERVICE AT ST. JOSEPH

The tradition of the Catholic Church has always been the celebration of the Mass with the **body present in the Church**. It is the teaching of the Church to respect and honor the body of the dead, which in Baptism becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Cremation: It is the Church's recommendation that if cremation of the body is to take place, it occurs following the Funeral Mass. However, if cremation immediately after death, the Church now permits the cremated remains to be brought into Church for the Funeral Mass.

Before you set up the date and time with the funeral home for service, please contact the parish or have the funeral home contact the parish to make sure the church and clergy are available.

Vigil Service (Wake Service) and Rosary are normally done the night before the Funeral Mass/Service at Church. It is always done at a Funeral Home and done by a Deacon. The Rosary alone can be done at Church with a special arrangement with the parish and it can be done by clergy, a family member or someone else.

Funeral Mass or Memorial Mass is done by a priest and only takes place at Church. Funeral Service (celebration of the Liturgy of the Words only) can be done by a deacon, both at Church or at the funeral home.

There are various Scripture readings that are chosen for Catholic funeral Mass/service by the Catholic Church. The celebrant of the Mass/service is happy to select appropriate Scripture readings and make all of the liturgical preparations for the funeral. Family is encouraged to choose the readings (please see our website). However, it is not required. If you wish to choose the readings, there are two options:

+Option 1: First Reading (either from OT or NT), Responsorial Psalm, Gospel.

+Option 2: First Reading from OT, Responsorial Psalm, Second Reading from letters of NT, Gospel.

Music is not needed at the funeral Mass/service. However, if you would like music, please coordinate with the funeral home to provide an honorarium. You can choose the songs for Funeral Mass on our website. Secular music is not allowed during Vigil Service at Church or funeral home, anytime in the church, especially at Funeral Mass/Service. If you wish to play any secular music, please arrange with the funeral home to play before or after the Vigil Service at the funeral home or at the grave site.

Eulogies are not appropriate at the Funeral Mass. However, one member of the family can give a thank you speech to those who are present at the Funeral Mass. If the family wishes to give a Eulogy, please encourage them to do at a Funeral Home either before or after the Vigil Service. If the family desire, please inform the church at the funeral arrangement.

The church offers free of charge to funeral Mass/service. However, family is welcome to offer donation to the Church.

Clergy also offers free of charge. If family wishes, Mass/service stipend is free-will offering to clergy for celebrating a Mass/service.

Catholic Funeral Readings

Only the following readings are to be used at Catholic Funeral Mass. You can choose two readings (one from OT and one for NT), Psalm and the Gospel, or one reading (either from OT or NT), Psalm and the Gospel. Other Bible Versions are not allowed to be used during Funeral Mass.

Old Testament

2 Maccabees 12:43-46 "...he made atonement for the dead..."

Job 19: 1, 23-27 "...I know that my vindicator lives..."

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 "...A time to be born, a time to die..."

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 "...A time to be born, a time to die..."

Wisdom 3:1-9 "...The souls of the just are in the hand of God..."

Wisdom 3:1-6,9 "...The souls of the just are in the hand of God..."

Wisdom 4:7-15 "The Righteous One, though he die early, shall be at rest..."

Sirach 2:1-11 "...in fire gold is tested....Compassionate is the Lord..."

Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9 "...he will destroy death forever..."

Isaiah 26:7-19 "...your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise..."

Isaiah 35:1-10 "...Here is your God, he comes with vindication..."

Isaiah 40:1-11 "...Here is your God, Here comes with power..."

Lamentations 3:17-26 "...My portion is the Lord, says my soul..."

Ezekiel 37:12-14 "O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise..."

Daniel 12:1-3 "...the wise shall shine brightly..."

Micah 7:7-9 "...though I sit in darkness, the Lord is my light..."

New Testament

Acts of the Apostles 10:34-43 "Everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins"

Acts of the Apostles 10:34-36,42-43 "Everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins"

Romans 5:1,5-11 "...We were reconciled to God through the death of his Son..."

Romans 5:17-21 "...through one righteous act acquittal and life came to all..."

Romans 6:3-9 "...if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall live with him..."

Romans 6:3-4,8-9 "...if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall live with him..."

Romans 8:1-11 "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ..."

Romans 8:14-23 "Those who are led by the Spirit of God are Children of God"

Romans 8:31-35,37-39 "If God is for us, who can be against us?"

Romans 14:7-9,10-12 "This is why Christ died and came to life"

1 Corinthians 2:6-10 "Eye has not seen, and ear has not heard..."

1 Corinthians 15:12-20 "If there is no resurrection of the dead..."

1 Corinthians 15:20-28 "In Adam all die, so too if Christ shall all be brought to life."

1 Corinthians 15:51-57 "Death where is your victory?"

2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1 "The one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us..."

2 Corinthians 5:1,6-10 "We would rather leave the body and go home..."

Philippians 3:7-14 "...I run toward the prize to which God calls me..."

Philippians 3:20-21 "He will change our lowly body..."

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 "If we believe that Jesus died and rose..."

2 Timothy 2:8-13 "Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead..."

2 Timothy 4:1-2,6-8 "I have competed well, I have finished the race..."

1 John 3:1-2 "Beloved, we are God's children now..."

1 John 3:14-16 "We know that we have passed from death to life..."

Revelation 14:13 "...Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord..."

Revelation 20:11-12:1 "...The sea gave up its dead; then Death and Hades..."

Revelation 21:1-5a,6b-7 "...I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem..."

Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12a "The Eight Beatitudes"

Matthew 11:25-30 "come to me . . . and I will give you rest."

Matthew 25:1-13 "Look. The bridegroom comes. Go out to meet him"

Matthew 25:31-46 "Come, you whom my Father has blessed"

Mark 15:33-39 "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Mark 15:33-39, 16:1-6 "Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last"

Luke 7:11-17 "Young man, I say to you, arise."

Luke 12:35-40 "Be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect..."

Luke 23:33,39-43 "Today you will be with me in paradise."

Luke 23:44-24:6a "Father, I put my life in your hands."

Luke 23:44-46 50, 52-53 "Father into your hands I commend my spirit"

Luke 24:13-35 "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer..."

Luke 24:13-16,28-35 "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer..."

John 5:24-29 "Whoever hears my word and believes has passed from..."

John 6:37-40 "All who believe in the Son will have eternal life..."

John 6:51-59 "All who eat this bread will live for ever...."

John 11:17-27 "I am the resurrection and the life."

John 11:21-27 "I am the resurrection and the life."

John 11:32-45 "Lazarus, come out."

John 12:23-28 "If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies..."

John 12:23-26 "If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies..."

John 14:1-6 "There are many rooms in my Father's house."

John 17:24-26 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me..."

John 19:17-18,25-39 "Jesus bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31	Acts 10:34-43	Matthew 6:19-23
Ecclesiastes 3:1-15	Romans 5:5-11	Luke 1:67-74
Song of Songs 8:6-7	Romans 5:17-21	John 3:13-17
Isaiah 35:1-6, 10	Romans 6:3-9	John 10:11-18
Isaiah 41:8-10, 13	Romans 8:14-23	John 10:27-30
Isaiah 57:15-19	Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39	
Isaiah 61:1-3	Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12	
Isaiah 65:17-21	1 Corinthians 15:20-23, 24b-28	
Ezekiel 34:11-16	1 Corinthians 15:51-57	
Micah 6:6-8	2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1	
Zephaniah 3:16	2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10	
	Ephesians 3:14-21	
	Philippians 3:20-21	
	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	
	2 Timothy 2:8-13	
	2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18	
	1 Peter 1:3-9	
	1 John 3:1-2	
	1 John 3:14-16	
	Revelation 14:13	
	Revelation 20:11-21:1	
	Revelation 21:1-5a, 6b-7	
	Revelation 22:1-7	

Music Guidelines for Funerals

General

"Music is integral to the funeral rites. It allows the community to express convictions and feelings that words alone may fail to convey. It has power to console and uplift the mourners and to strengthen the unity of the assembly in faith and love. The texts of songs chosen for a particular celebration should express the paschal mystery of the Lord's suffering, death, and triumph over death and should be related to the readings from Scripture.

Since music can evoke strong feelings, the music for the celebration rites should be chosen with great care. The music at funerals should support, console, and uplift the participants and should help to create in them a spirit of hope in Christ's victory over death and in the Christian's share in the victory.

Music should be provided for the funeral liturgy. The specific notes that precede each of these rites suggest places in the rites where music is appropriate. Many musical settings used by the parish community during the liturgical year may be suitable for use at funerals. Efforts should be made to develop and expand the parish's repertoire for use at funerals.

An organist or other instrumentalist, a cantor, and whenever possible, even a choir should assist the assembly's full participation in singing the songs, responses, and acclamations of these rites" (Order of Christian Funerals: General Introduction, 30-33).

Specific to St. Joseph

Because music has such a dignified place within the funeral liturgies, at St. Joseph Catholic Church we presume that our pianist and cantor will be assisting at each funeral, please see Funeral Policies and Procedures for further details. Guest musicians or cantors will be considered at the family's request and could be incorporated into the funeral liturgy according to specific abilities and preferences of each musician or cantor.

The following are lists of music suitable to Catholic Funeral Liturgies. Music not appearing on these lists will be considered on an individual basis and recorded music is never appropriate for any Catholic liturgy.

Funeral Music Suggestions:

Abide with Me
All Creatures of Our God and King
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus
Amazing Grace
Be Not Afraid
Be Still My Soul
Be Thou My Vision

By All Your Saints Still Striving
Christ be Beside Me
Crown Him with Many Crowns
Dies Irae
Faith of Our Fathers
For All the Saints
Holy God We Praise Thy Name
Holy, Holy, Holy
How Firm a Foundation
How Great Thou Art
I Am the Bread of Life
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say
I Know that My Redeemer Lives
In Every Age
It Ss Well With My Soul
Jerusalem, My Happy Home
Jesus Christ is Risen Today
Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All
Jesus, Remember Me
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
Lead Kindly Light
Lift High the Cross
Lord of All Hopefulness
Lord, Jesus Think on Me
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
Make Me a Channel of Your Peace
My God Accept My Heart This Day
O God our Help in Ages Past
On Eagle's Wings
Precious Lord, Take my Hand
Shelter Me O God
Shepherd of Souls
Sing with All the Saints in Glory
Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God
Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling
Soul of My Savior
The Call
The Church's One Foundation
The King of Love My Shepherd Is
The Strife is O're
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King
What Wondrous Love is This

Solos

Ave Maria (Gounod or Schubert)

Response Psalms

Psalm 23: Shepherd Me, O God

Psalm 25: To You, O Lord

Psalm 27: The Lord is My Light

Psalm 63: Your Love is Finer than...

Psalm 91: All Who Dwell...

Psalm 103: The Lord is Kind and ...

Psalm 130: With the Lord there is...