



## FUNERAL PLANNING GUIDE

Full Name of Deceased \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth of Deceased \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Death of Deceased \_\_\_\_\_

### Burial or Cremation

One of the initial decisions to make about a funeral is if there will be a burial or cremation. Although the Church encourages burial it does allow cremation as long as there is no disrespect intended toward the body. Canon Law states that the Church earnestly recommends that the pious custom of burying the bodies of the deceased be observed; nevertheless, the Church does not prohibit cremation unless it was chosen for reasons contrary to Christian doctrine (Canon 1176 #3). The reasons for the preference of burial over cremation are explained well in a pamphlet published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), *Reflections on the body, Cremation and Catholic Funeral Rites*. (The pamphlet can be ordered by calling 1-800-235-8722).

**If cremation is chosen, the Church would ask that the body still be present for the funeral Mass.** As Catholic Christians, we hold a special reverence for the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit. If it is not possible to have the body present, then the funeral rite calls for the cremated remains to be present at the funeral Mass. If this is not possible, then the Church offers a "Memorial Mass" instead of the Mass of Christian Burial (funeral). The Mass of Christian Burial with a body or with the cremated remains is very similar in ritual and prayers. If you are not sure what to decide, talk with your pastor or deacon.

### The Vigil (Wake)

Once you have decided on burial or cremation, you will need to consider whether or not there will be a Vigil. Omission of the Vigil is an option. The Vigil is generally held the night before the Mass of Christian Burial and can have different formats:

- 1) A Scripture Vigil uses readings from the Bible and has special prayers that are said for the deceased and their family and friends.
- 2) A Rosary Vigil is the recitation of the Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary for the deceased. Frequently, a Scripture and Rosary Vigil can be combined. The minister for the Vigil can be a priest or deacon.

If you would like your family members or friends to have the opportunity to offer brief eulogies in remembrance of the deceased, you are highly encouraged to have these take place at the time of the Vigil (Wake). This is encouraged because, with the exception of a single written, prepared and authorized reflection/remembrance of the deceased, eulogies are not permitted during the funeral Mass.

Who would you like the Celebrant of the Funeral Liturgy to be? \_\_\_\_\_

Concelebrating Priest(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Who would you like your pallbearers to be? Six is traditional however you may have more or less.

1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_ 6 \_\_\_\_\_

## THE FUNERAL LITURGY

### THE RITE AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE CHURCH

Greeting

Sprinkling with Holy Water

Placing of the Pall by pallbearers

Placing of Christian symbols: crucifix and bible (optional)

Entrance Antiphon

Just as the Mass of Christian Burial is ready to begin, the clergy and family members gather around the casket or the cremated remains at the doors of the church. The main celebrant will greet the community and then bless the body or the cremated remains with holy water as a sign of Baptism. The pallbearers will then cover the casket with the pall (the large white cloth used to remind us of our white baptismal garments.) No pall or white cloth is used for the cremated remains. A symbol of Christian life, such a Bible, Rosary, or crucifix, may be placed on the casket.

### **Entrance Antiphon**

The **Entrance Antiphon** of the Mass is sung while the casket is brought to the front of the church. The family and pallbearers follow behind. If there is no casket, but rather an urn, the urn is carried to a table in the front of the church, usually by a family member or friend.

### THE LITURGY OF THE WORD (See separate list of Scripture choices.)

Which First Reading have you chosen? \_\_\_\_\_

Who would you like to read the First Reading? \_\_\_\_\_

Which Responsorial Psalm have you chosen? \_\_\_\_\_

(The Responsorial Psalm is usually sung, but may be read.)

Which Second Reading have you chosen? \_\_\_\_\_

Who would you like to read the Second Reading? \_\_\_\_\_

Which Gospel Reading have you chosen? \_\_\_\_\_

**Homily** (given by priest or deacon)

**Prayers of the Faithful** (led by priest or deacon)

**THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

The **Offertory Chant** of the Mass is sung during the preparation of gifts.

Who would you like to carry the offertory gifts up to the altar? Two to four people.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Sanctus/Holy, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen**

Missal Chant English \_\_\_\_\_ Latin \_\_\_\_\_

Missa Simplex \_\_\_\_\_

**The Lord's Prayer**

**Agnus Dei/Lamb of God**

Missal Chant English \_\_\_\_\_ Latin \_\_\_\_\_

Missa Simplex \_\_\_\_\_

**Communion**

The **Communion Chant** of the funeral Mass is the primary song during this rite.

**Final Commendation**

**Incensing and Song of Farewell**

**In Paradisum**

English \_\_\_\_\_ Latin \_\_\_\_\_ Both \_\_\_\_\_

**Hymn Request**

The Church gives beautiful Scriptures to be sung at each part during the Mass. If there is another hymn you would like to include, please list it here. A list of appropriate hymns for funerals is provided separately. You may wish to list two alternatives, and the musicians will choose one based on their voices.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Requests:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## HYMN OPTIONS FOR FUNERALS

The Church gives us beautiful Scriptures to be sung at each part during the Mass. Additionally, a list of appropriate hymns for funerals is provided below. You may wish to choose two alternatives, and the musicians will choose one suited to their voices and abilities. The song numbers listed here are from the *St. Michael Hymnal*, available in our pews.

- *Abide With Me* (EVENTIDE) (#402): lovely words for hopeful life after death.
- *Adoro Te Devote* (ADORO TE DEVOTE) (#408): St. Thomas Aquinas poem with the original Latin text, very traditional
- *Ave Maria* (CHANT MODE 1) (#441)
- *Ave Maria*, Bach-Gounod (solo)
- *Ave Maria*, Franz Schubert (solo)
- *Ave Verum* (CHANT MODE VI) (#444): another traditional Gregorian chant hymn to the Blessed Sacrament, by St. Thomas Aquinas
- *All You Who Seek a Comfort Sure* (KINGSFOLD) (#422): this beautiful hymn is for those seeking comfort and consolation in the sacred heart of Jesus.
- *Be Still My Soul* (FINLANDIA) (#451): this was sung at President Reagan's funeral. Its last lines include this text: "when friends depart, and all is darkness in this vale of tears, then shalt thou better know his love, his heart, who comes to soothe thy sorrows and thy fears."
- *Be Thou My Vision* (SLANE) (#452): this is a 1500 year old poem written by the Irish poet St. Dallán Forgaill.
- *Eternal Father Strong to Save* (#518): this Navy hymn was FDR's favorite, it was sung as part of the funeral rites of both President John F. Kennedy and his wife Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis.
- *Faith of our Fathers* (ST. CATHERINE) (#520)
- *God of Our Fathers* (NATIONAL HYMN) (#538): this hymn speaks of the God who brings those who keep the true religion through the battle and darkness into never ending day. It was used in the funeral procession of General Schwarzkopf, and was also part of President Lyndon B. Johnson.
- *How Firm a Foundation* (#567): This was a favorite hymn during the American Civil War on both sides. It was sung at the funerals of General Robert E. Lee and Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson.
- *Humbly We Adore Thee* (ADORO TE DEVOTE) (#570): traditional St. Thomas Aquinas poem set to English words
- *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* (KINGSFOLD) (#572): this is a XIX century Scottish hymn that alludes to finding rest in Christ. The *Order of Christian Funerals* lists this as a suitable hymn for funerals.
- *I Know That My Redeemer Lives* (DUNEDIN) (#573)
- *I Know That My Redeemer Liveth*, from *Messiah*, G. F. Handel (solo)

- *Jerusalem, My Happy Home* (LAND OF REST) (#587): This hymn set to an American folk melody speaks of the restful Promise Land of heaven. The *Order of Christian Funerals* recommends this as a suitable hymn for a funeral.
- *Lead Kindly Light* (LUX IN TENEBRIS) (#607): this beautiful hymn by Cardinal Newman was played at the funeral procession of President Eisenhower. It acknowledges that God has led us through the mistakes of our youth, and asks the Lord to lead us on the “angles” of those who have gone before us in death.
- *Lord of All Hopefulness* (SLANE) (#622): prayer for God’s blessings through all phases of life from the beginning through the end of life.
- *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling* (#627): the beautiful text of this hymn makes it perfect for funerals. It was sung at Baroness Margaret Thatcher’s Funeral.
- *Merciful Savior* (OLD 124TH) (#633): this is a funeral hymn that prays for God’s mercy upon his servants who have past beyond life’s cares. The *Order of Christian Funerals* recommends this as a suitable hymn for a funeral.
- *My Shepherd Will Supply My Need* (RESIGNATION CMD) (#634) – Setting of Psalm 23
- *Nearer My God to Thee* (BETHANY) (#637): this hymn was played as they cleared the dead from the battlefield of Gettysburg, as the Titanic sank, and at the funeral of presidents
- *O God Beyond All Praising* (#659): this was sung at the funeral of Princes Diana, and it was the closing hymn at the funeral of Cardinal George of Chicago. It speaks of our responsibility to make a sacrifice of praise to God even in our sorrow.
- *O God, Our Help in Ages Past* (ST. ANNE) (#661): There are many verses, but this hymn is otherwise a beautiful option for a funeral, as it speaks of the enduring aid of God, who survives us all. This was sung at the funeral of Winston Churchill, and played at the funeral of President Lyndon B. Johnson. The *Order of Christian Funerals* recommends this as a suitable hymn for a funeral.
- *Panis Angelicus* (LAMBILLOTTE) (#709) – traditional Eucharistic hymn in Latin
- *Pie Jesu*, Gabriel Fauré (solo or duet) – Prayer taken from *Dies Irae*, the traditional funeral sequence: “Merciful Lord Jesus, grant them eternal rest.”
- *Praise to the Holiest in the Height* (NEWMAN CM) (#719)
- *Shepherd of Souls* (ST. AGNES) (#745)
- *Soul of My Savior* (ANIMA CHRISTI) (#759)
- *The King of Love My Shepherd Is* (ST. COLUMBA) (#784): this hymn is set to the familiar Irish melody “St. Columba” and it was sung at the funeral of Princess Diana and at the funeral of Cardinal Egan of New York City. The *Order of Christian Funerals* also recommends this as a suitable hymn for a funeral.
- *Ultima* (ULTIMA) (#807): This chant is part of the Benedictine tradition. The monks sing it on feast days at the end of meals, but also at funerals. Many of our monasteries were founded from mother houses in German speaking lands, so it is often sung in Latin, German and English. It is a prayer that Mary will lead us home to her Divine Son.