

Funeral Guidelines

St. Michael the Archangel Pastorate

Sts. Peter and Paul, Goodland

Sacred Heart, Remington

St. Augustine, Rensselaer

The death of a loved one, even when it is expected, is always a traumatic event. The Church has understood this very well for two millennia, and has provided for Her children the funeral rites.

The Catholic funeral normally has three parts: the Vigil (the “Wake”), the Funeral Mass, and the Committal (“Burial”). These rites of the Church are one of the few truly “stational” liturgies that remain in our current practice. “Stational” means that the liturgy moves from place to place as its various elements are celebrated. This special character is seen clearly as the funeral “moves” from the Vigil Prayers at the funeral home to the celebration of the Funeral Mass at the parish church and finally to the cemetery. This movement becomes a living icon of the Christian’s journey through this life to eternal life.

The funeral rites (rituals, or liturgies) consist of:

1. The wake service (or Vigil),
2. the Funeral Mass,
3. and the Rite of Committal (or the graveside service).

The Church envisions that each of these services will be celebrated in its proper order because each contributes to the full and proper understanding of life and death in Christ.

The wake service is the first opportunity for friends and relatives to greet the family of the deceased and express their condolences. The wake service consists of several scriptural readings, a brief homily, and prayers for the deceased. It may be done at any time during the wake itself. Usually it is done at the beginning, particularly at wakes at which there is expected to be a very large number of people. This is the opportune venue for those who would like to deliver eulogies or words of remembrance. The wake is often thought of as the celebration of the deceased’s life.

The Funeral Mass is offered at the deceased's parish church. The Mass is not a celebration of the deceased's life. Rather, the Mass is always the celebration of our Lord's suffering, death, and resurrection. When the Mass is offered, the whole Church, Triumphant (heaven), Militant (the baptized here in this world), and Suffering (the souls in Purgatory) is engaged. The Church on earth continues, or makes present supernaturally, our Lord's sacrifice of Himself for our salvation on the Cross. The whole Church, in heaven and on earth, prays for the repose of the soul of the deceased. This is the purpose of the Funeral Mass: to apply the merits Christ's salvific death and resurrection to the soul of the deceased for whom the Funeral Mass is offered. The wake is about the deceased. The Funeral Mass is about Jesus Christ.

The third part of the Funeral liturgy is the committal or burial. It is ideal that the Funeral Mass and the committal take place on the same day and immediately following the Mass. However, there may be need for some time between due to location of the burial site or some other circumstance.

If a person is to be cremated, it is the Church's expectation that the body be present for the funeral, before cremation, and the cremation take place after the Funeral Mass. The cremated remains shall be interred in a sacred space (i.e. a cemetery) as soon as possible, out of respect for the dignity of the person being laid to rest and for the completion of the Funeral Rites. It is opposed to Catholic teaching to spread or distribute ashes in various locations or in areas not specifically designated for burial (i.e. a cemetery or columbarium). Additional context on cremation:

- The burial of the Lord's own body in the earth is the primary model for the disposition of the body of the deceased Christian. Our Catholic funeral tradition presumes that the body of the deceased Christian, washed clean in baptism and anointed with the oil of salvation, will be reverently buried in imitation of the Lord Jesus.
- While circumstances might make cremation seem a convenient or even a necessary option, this practice is always properly considered as one way of preparing the body for burial, and not as a substitute for burial.
- When cremation has been chosen, the Funeral Mass should be celebrated in the usual way, with the body present, if possible, and cremation to follow.
- If the body of the deceased cannot be brought to the church prior to its cremation, the Funeral Mass can still be celebrated in presence of the cremated remains, according to the norms in *Appendix II of the Order of Christian Funerals*.

- Out of reverence for the body of the deceased, the cremated remains of the body, once a temple of the Holy Spirit, are to be kept intact in their own sealed container. They may never be scattered over land or sea, much less divided into separate containers.
- Reverence for the cremated remains also demands that the sealed container be buried in the ground or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium, and not kept in one's home.
- Even if delayed by some days or even weeks after the funeral Mass, the burial of the cremated remains should always take place using the appropriate ritual prescribed by the Church.

For these reasons, the following guidelines are observed at the Parishes of the St. Michael the Archangel Pastorate:

1. The Church permits Funeral Masses to be celebrated on all days of the year except Sundays, Holy Days of Obligation and on Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday. On these days, the body may be brought to the church for the Liturgy of the Word of the Funeral Mass and for the Final Commendation at a convenient time separate from the liturgy of the day. A Mass should then be offered for the deceased as soon as possible at the convenience of the family and the parish personnel.
 - a. Due to the nature of only having one priest for the pastorate, Saturday Funeral Masses and Committals cannot be scheduled at this time.
 - i. A family's desired time and/or day may not be attainable; thus, a back-up date should be anticipated in early planning.
 - b. The Funeral Director and family shall coordinate with the parish and the pastor prior to finalizing or publishing any Funeral times or dates.
 - i. The terms "Funeral Mass" or "Mass of Christian Burial" shall be used in obituaries.
 - ii. The term "Mass of the Resurrection" is not appropriate, since it refers specifically to the Mass that is celebrated at the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night.
 - iii. The term "Celebration of Life" is also not appropriate for the Funeral Mass, as described above.
 - c. Any visiting clergy must first consult with the pastor prior to making any commitments/arraignments.
 - i. Any clergy from outside the Diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana must have a Letter of Good Standing on file in the Bishop's office before being able to serve in any liturgical capacity.

2. The practice of delivering eulogies or words of Christian remembrance during the Funeral Mass is prohibited.
 - a. Eulogies are encouraged at the wake, graveside, and customary meal following the graveside service.
 - b. The homily is a vital and necessary part of the funeral liturgy; it must not be eulogistic in character. However, death is an individual experience for each person and the homily therefore should not be totally depersonalized. The homily may properly include an expression of praise and gratitude to God for the deceased person's Christian life and the virtues he or she showed in living or in facing death.
3. Anyone who carries out a liturgical role at the Mass in a Catholic church (Readers/lectors, gift bearers, altar servers, etc.) must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church (see Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism #133).
 - a. Family members or others who are Catholics may exercise special roles in the Funeral Mass by helping to place the Pall on the casket at the beginning of the funeral Mass or proclaiming the Scripture readings or the General Intercessions or by presenting the bread and wine at the Preparation of the Gifts.
 - b. Persons of any Christian denomination or even of another faith may always serve as pallbearers.
4. Music used at the Mass must be liturgical music. Liturgical music is music written expressly for the liturgy/Mass. The purpose of the Catholic funeral is to reaffirm our faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ as our singular source of comfort and hope when we are faced with death. All the elements of a Catholic funeral must support that central focus. Indeed, all the music chosen must be able to pass the test posed by the question: "*Does this song clearly express our faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus?*" Therefore, we must raise the caution that most secular music is not appropriate for use during the funeral Mass.
 - a. Thus, popular songs whether of a religious or secular nature may not be used because they are not written for the Mass.
 - b. "The texts of the songs chosen... should express the paschal mystery of the Lord's suffering, death, and triumph over death and should be related to the readings from Scripture" (Order of Christian Funerals #30).
 - c. Pre-recorded music may not be played at the Funeral Mass. The liturgy (work, or offering) is properly carried out by those in attendance.
 - d. Singing is to be done by the musicians and congregation in attendance. Thus, the General Instruction of the Roman Missal states in Nos. 39-40: "The Christian faithful

who gather together as one to await the Lord's coming are instructed by the Apostle Paul to sing together psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs (cf. Col 3:16). Singing is the sign of the heart's joy (cf. Acts 2:46). Thus, Saint Augustine says rightly, 'Singing is for one who loves.' There is also the ancient proverb: 'One who sings well prays twice.' "Great importance should therefore be attached to the use of singing in the celebration of the Mass, with due consideration for the culture of the people and abilities of each liturgical assembly."

Funeral Mass Music

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Sacred Heart, Remington

St. Augustine, Rensselaer

Many people do not know that the Catholic Funeral Mass already has an abundance of music with sacred texts and fitting intercessions for the deceased.

Please take some time to read and meditate on these texts as they bring comfort to families and friends.

All of this music is sung at every funeral offered at the parishes of the St. Michael the Archangel Pastorate.

RECEPTION

After the arrival of the Body to the Church, the body is received by the Priest.

The Greeting and Sprinkling of Holy Water is done at the reception.

OPTIONAL – Placing of the Pall is done prior to the procession.

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

A Hymn or Chant may be sung during the procession into the Church.

(1A) *Optional Hymn:* _____

If there is a Hymn, upon the conclusion of the Hymn (when everyone has reached their seats) the

OPTIONAL Placing of Christian Symbols takes place at this time.

After the placing of symbols or the conclusion of the Hymn, the Entrance Antiphon is chanted:

(1B) *“Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.”*

LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Responsorial Psalm may be sung by the cantor or read by a reader.

(2) **Sung Psalm Number:** _____

The Gospel Acclamation is proclaimed by the Cantor

- (3) ***“I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me will not die for ever.”***
- Jn 6:51

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

(4A) The offertory Chant will be offered:

“Pie Iesu Domine, dona eis requiem. Dona eis requiem sempiternam.”

Translation: *“Merciful Lord Jesus, grant them rest; grant them eternal rest.”*

A Hymn or Chant may also be sung during the Offertory of Mass

(4B) Optional Hymn/Chant: _____

The Ordinary of the Mass is also sung:

*“Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts;
Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.”*

*“Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them rest,
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them rest,
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, grant them eternal rest.”*

(5A) During Holy Communion the *Lux Aaterna* is sung (cf 4 Esdr 2:34-35):

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>“Lux æterna luceat eis, Domine:</i> | <i>Let perpetual Light shine upon them,</i> |
| <i>Cum Sanctis tuis in æternum:</i> | <i>with your Saints for ever,</i> |
| <i>quia pius es.</i> | <i>you are merciful.</i> |
| <i>Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine:</i> | <i>Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,</i> |
| <i>et lux perpetua luceat eis.</i> | <i>and let perpetual light shine upon them,</i> |
| <i>Cum Sanctis tuis in æternum:</i> | <i>with your Saints for ever,</i> |
| <i>quia pius es.”</i> | <i>for you are merciful.</i> |

Optional Communion Hymn/Chant:

(5B) **Optional Hymn/Chant:** _____

Optional Post Communion Meditation:

(6) **Optional Hymn/Chant:** _____

FINAL COMMENDATION

Song of Farewell is sung while the coffin is sprinkled with holy water and incensed.

R. Receive his/her soul and present him/her to God the Most High.

Saints of God, come to his/her aid!

Hasten to meet him/her, angels of the Lord!

R. Receive his/her soul and present him/her to God the Most High.

May Christ, who called you, take you to himself;

may angels lead you to the bosom of Abraham.

R. Receive his/her soul and present him/her to God the Most High.

Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord,

and let perpetual light shine upon him/her.

R. Receive his/her soul and present him/her to God the Most High.

PROCESSION TO THE PLACE OF COMMITTAL

During the Procession, the *In Paradisum* is Sung:

*“In paradisum deducant te Angeli:
in tuo adventu suscipiant te Martyres,
et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Ierusalem.
Chorus Angelorum te suscipiat,
et cum Lazaro quondam paupere æternam
habeas requiem.”*

*“May the angels lead you into paradise;
may the martyrs receive you at your arrival
and lead you to the holy city Jerusalem.
May choirs of angels receive you
and with Lazarus, once a poor man, may you
have eternal rest.”*

NOTE: Should the family choose to include optional songs, please refer to the list at the bottom. The hymns included in the list meet the criteria of reverence, beauty and solemn character of the Catholic Funeral Mass.

Hymns - General

All Creatures of Our God and King

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus

Be Thou My Vision

By All Your Saints Still Striving

Crown Him with Many Crowns

For All the Saints

Holy God We Praise Thy Name

Holy, Holy, Holy

I Am the Bread of Life

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

I Know that My Redeemer Lives

Jesus Christ is Risen Today

Jesus, My Lord, My God, My All

Lift High the Cross

Lord of All Hopefulness

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory

O God our Help in Ages Past

Rejoice, The Lord is King

Sing with All the Saints in Glory

Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God

Shepherd of Souls

Shepherd Me, O God

The Church's One Foundation

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy

To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King

What Wondrous Love Is This

Solos

Ave Maria

Ave Verum Corpus

Panis Angelicus

Pie Jesu

In Paradisum

Requiem Aeternum

Hymns – Advent

Come, O Long Expected Jesus

Comfort, Comfort, O My People

Creator of the Stars of Night

My Soul in Stillness Waits

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

On Jordan's Bank

Hymns – Easter

At the Lamb's High Feast

Be Joyful Mary

Christ the Lord is Risen Today

Come Raise the Joyful Strain

Hail the Day that Sees Him Rise

Jesus Christ is Risen Today

The Strife is o'er

This is the Feast of Victory

(Cont' next page)

Hymns – Christmas

Angels We Have Heard...

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

Joy to the World

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Silent Night, Holy Night

Songs of Thankfulness and Praise

What Child is This

Hymns – Lent

Lord Who Throughout These 40 Days

All Glory, Laud, and Honor

Jesus, Remember Me

O Sacred Head Surrounded

Funeral Mass Readings

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The selection of passages from the Bible is an important part of planning a funeral ceremony, as we want to turn to God's word for wisdom and comfort in this time of loss. The Word of God is at the heart of our Christian celebration of faith in this funeral rite in anticipation of the resurrection of the body.

To make this easier for the family, the Catholic Church has pre-selected a number of Biblical passages which are appropriate for the occasion of a funeral. Please look over these passages as part of your funeral preparations, and find those words which speak to your heart.

Instructions:

1. The first reading is taken from the Old Testament.
2. The Responsorial Psalm is taken from the book of Psalms.
3. The second reading is taken from the New Testament.
4. The gospel reading is also taken from the New Testament, and it may be chosen either by the priest or by the family. This may be discussed by the family with the priest who will preside the funeral liturgy.
5. The family is invited to designate two persons to read the first two readings, one reading each. If the psalm is to be read, not sung, then the family may pick a third person to read it. The psalm may be sung by a cantor, who may lead the congregation to sing a response.
6. The priest or an assisting deacon will proclaim the gospel.
7. Once you have selected your readings, please let the priest know the reading numbers, as well as the names of those who will be doing the readings.

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 4:7-14 "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..."

Responsorial 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...

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..." (cont' next page)

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 ---16:6 "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 23:33-43 "Today you will be with me in paradise." (cont' next page)

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

Luke 23:44-49 "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 6:51-58 "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 19:17-30 "Jesus bowed his head and gave up his spirits."