

Funeral Guidelines and Mass Information

The following practical information is provided to help the family and friends of the deceased make the most suitable and helpful arrangements.

- Funeral Masses are scheduled for Monday, Wednesday and Friday beginning at 11:00 a.m.
- The body of the deceased—with the casket open or closed—may lie in state for 30 minutes in the viewing area of the church before the Mass begins. The procession begins at the Gathering Space with the ministers and the body of the deceased. Family and friends then follow. The funeral liturgy begins at the Baptismal Font by the Altar with the sprinkling with holy water, and the placing of the pall. (**Visitations are suspended at this time due to COVID guidelines**)
- An opportunity for prayer is usually scheduled at the funeral home on the day before the funeral. A vigil service (which is a simple service of prayers, a scripture reading, intercessions, the Lord's Prayer and a blessing) is the church's preference; or a rosary may be planned and will be lead by a member of the Parish Pastoral Team.
- The appropriate time for family and friends to share stories and memories is at the funeral home following the vigil service or rosary, and it may be led by the staff from the funeral home or a family member. Family may also speak at the luncheon. These settings allow enough time for all who wish to speak. Eulogies are not allowed during the Funeral Mass.
- With regard to cremation, while Catholic teaching continues to stress the preference for burial or entombment of the body of the deceased, cremation is now permitted. The church clearly prefers and urges that the body of the deceased be present for the funeral rites and that cremation take place after the full funeral liturgy with the body present.
- The celebration of the Catholic funeral liturgy may take place in the presence of the cremated remains when the body is cremated before the funeral. In that case, the Order of Christian Funerals, No. 417, clearly states that an appropriate, worthy container such as a classic urn is proper for the cremated remains. The remains are to be properly buried in a cemetery or a columbarium (a permanent place of reposition intended specifically for cremated remains). The practice of scattering cremated remains on the seas or on the ground, keeping them in the home or dividing them among people or places is not the reverent disposition that the church requires.
- In some cases, a service in the funeral home or the church, in lieu of a Funeral Mass in the church, may be an appropriate choice. Mass may not be celebrated in the funeral home.

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In planning the funeral liturgy, family members have several options which they may exercise as they wish.

- **Music:** Music chosen for the funeral liturgy may be Christian liturgical music (hymns or psalms) or most classical music. Please refer to the music selection sheet for suggestions and return the completed sheet to the Parish Office as soon as possible.
- **Placing of the Pall:** At the beginning of the liturgy while assembled at the Baptismal Font, the pall (a white cloth) is reverently placed over the casket as a reminder of the white garment the deceased received on the day of baptism. It is appropriate for family or friends to place the pall on the casket.
- **Scripture Readings:** The family may choose the Scripture readings from those designated by the church for funerals. If that is your wish, a booklet of selected readings will be provided. Please let the Parish Office know your choices as soon as possible. The family may ask up to two individuals to proclaim the reading(s) at Mass. It is usually best when readers have had some experience reading publicly. Otherwise, the parish will assume the responsibility for this ministry.
- **Presentation of the Gifts:** Family and/or friends may be designated to present the gifts of bread and wine. While there are usually only three items to be presented, any number of persons may participate in the presentation.
- **Distribution of Communion:** Communion may be distributed under both forms (bread and wine) if there are Eucharistic ministers among the family and friends of the deceased who wish to exercise their ministry at the Funeral Mass.
- **Eulogy:** In accordance with the directives from Archbishop Vigneron a eulogy is not allowed during the Funeral Liturgy. Family or friends may be invited to share such a testimony at the end of the Vigil or at the memorial luncheon that often follows the funeral.