

# NOTES FOR THE FAMILY

The Parish families of St. Agnes, St. Paul of the Cross and St. Rose extend to you and your family our deepest concerns of sympathy at this time of your loss. Part of our concern is also to help you plan and participate in the Funeral Liturgy. Those who do experience deeper consolation and strength during these days. Here are some suggestions to help you plan.

**WAKE SERVICE:** This is a scriptural service which is held either before or after calling hours at the Funeral Home. It is not required but it offers some settling for the family in preparation for the Liturgy in Church. Please inform the Funeral Director if you wish this service and the time convenient for your family. He will notify the parish minister who will conduct this service.

## **PARTICIPATION**

**READING SELECTIONS:** You and your family have several options for participating in the Funeral Liturgy. The Funeral Director has provided you with this book from which you may choose an Old Testament and a New Testament reading with appropriate Psalm Responses. You may also choose the Gospel reading which will be read by the Priest/Deacon. If one of your family or a family friend feels comfortable being a Lector or has served as a Lector, they may do one or both of the readings. They may do the Old Testament reading and the New Testament reading. Final selection of the readings and readers will take place when you meet with the parish representative. The Funeral Director will be happy to make copies as needed. The Funeral Director can also communicate any last-minute changes to the Priest/Deacon.

**MUSIC:** The family may also choose hymns for the Mass. A list of suggested hymns known by the choirs in each parish is in this binder or on our website. These selections of music, commonly used at Church funerals and services, are appropriate for the funeral Mass. More popular music is appropriate for the wake service, graveside or the reception following the funeral.

**SYMBOLS OF CHRISTIAN LIFE:** A symbol of the Christian life May be carried in procession by a family member or friend and placed on the coffin when it is located before the altar. This symbol may be a bible or book of the Gospels as a sign that we live by the word of God and that fidelity to that word leads to eternal life. It might also be a cross as a sign that the Christian is marked by the Cross in Baptism and, through Jesus' suffering on the cross, is brought to the victory of his resurrection. Please let the Funeral Director know of your desires in this regard so he can inform the priest.

**WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE:** Following the greeting and opening prayer and before the beginning of the Liturgy of the Word, a member of the family or friend may speak in remembrance of the deceased. This is an occasion to cite some of the ways in which your loved one inspired them and deepened their faith through his or her life on earth. One way of understanding this is "*how did our loved one strive to live the Gospel we have chosen?*" We ask that there be only one speaker and be a person who feels confident and comfortable making this presentation as it may become emotional. We ask that there be a time limit of about 3 minutes (2 typed pages). It is best that what is to be said be written beforehand and it will be read from the pulpit. "Off the cuff" remarks can become unwieldy. Also, we ask that any stories recounted at this time be stories appropriate for Church and in language acceptable in a Church setting.

**COMMITTAL AT THE CEMETERY:** The liturgical prayers at the cemetery no longer require a priest to be present. This liturgy may be done by a Parish minister, a member or friend of the family, or by the Funeral Director.