

First you must allow yourself to feel the pain of loss and grieve. Then in time and with hard work, the good days will begin to out number the bad days.

Let faith be your consolation and eternal life your hope. Jesus can help you heal if you invite him into the process. Through Jesus’ suffering and death, we find hope and healing. It is an unrealistic expectation, however, to think that healing will restore your life back exactly the way it was before your loss. There is no full recovery. Some part of your loss may remain unrecovered for the rest of your life. This doesn’t mean though that you cannot have peace and joy within you. Healing involves making peace with your life and even finding joy again. There is always loss before gain. Through this healing process, you will emerge a new person - stronger, more compassionate, more understanding, and loving, with a life full of renewed meaning, purpose and love.

Putting the pieces back together: Although this life has to end, love doesn’t. A heart can be broken, but it still keeps beating. You can feel shattered, but you can put the pieces together again. Healing is a daily journey and a constant choice to go on and to look forward. Healing comes not from the forgetting, but from the remembering. Piece by piece, you will be healing.

May you experience the peace of Jesus Christ, which is beyond all understanding, as you continue to journey through your loss to healing and await your joyful reunion with all your loved ones.

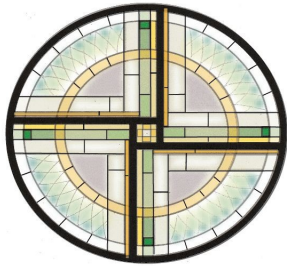


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Planning The Mass of Christian Burial



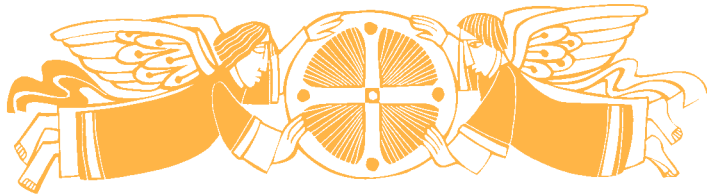
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*“At the death of a Christian, whose life of faith
was begun in the waters of baptism
and strengthened at the Eucharistic table,
the Church intercedes on behalf of the deceased
because of its confident belief that death is not the end
nor does it break the bonds forged in life.
The Church also ministers to the sorrowing
and consoles them in the funeral rites
with the comforting word of God
and the sacrament of the Eucharist”*

(Order of Christian Funerals, #4)



This booklet has been prepared by the parish office to help assist your family in planning the Mass of Christian Burial for your loved one. We hope that by selecting your own readings and music, you and your family might share more fully in the liturgy, and express your abiding love and care for the deceased.

Important to Note:

Enclosed with this booklet is a liturgy planning form. **Please complete the form and return it via email to the St. Bridget of Kildare Parish Office at stbridget5620@yahoo.com, or to Mary Queen of the Apostles Parish at mqabrookpark@gmail.com at least 2 days in advance of the funeral.** If you need assistance, please talk to your funeral director, or contact the parish office where the funeral will be held.

Please be assured of the prayers and concern of our parish for you and your family during this time of loss and grief.

The 6th Piece: Manage your Loss

There is no easy way to bypass the experience of grief when a loved one dies. You must learn to manage your loss and not have your loss manage you. Bad things do happen to good people. You are still fragile, yet strong. Your heart is shattered, your bones ache and there are knots in your stomach. It is faith that continues to move you forward. Gradually, you will not only reclaim aspects of your old life but also add new ones, too. You will never really “get over it,” but you can get through it. Through grieving, “moving on” is really moving back to former activities that you used to do and enjoy—dining out, going to the movies, doing hobbies, shopping, singing in church, among others. We never really “let go” of our loved ones, but we do loosen our grip a little bit and let go of some of the pain. They are still a part of you and always will be! Take time to make a little connection with them every day.

The 7th Piece: Hope for Healing

At the root of our faith is an unshakable hope. Death is not the end. We believe that with Christ, there is life after death – “for your faithful people life has changed, not ended” (Preface of Christian Death, 1). Knowing and experiencing this makes our grief much different; it may not be any easier, but it is different.

We are like the Israelites who, when faced with the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, did not despair but dared to hope and cried out in their grief: “My soul is bereft of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is. My soul continually thinks of my affliction and is bowed down within me. Yet I still dare to hope when I remember this: the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end” (Lamentations 3:17, 20-22).

We too dare to hope in the Lord. When a loved one dies, we grieve their loss. Christians grieve like everyone else, but we also grieve with faith and look to the crucified and risen Jesus for our hope. St. Paul encourages us to trust in the power of Christ’s resurrection: “We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died so that you may not grieve as others who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died” (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14).

There is life after death for your loved one. There is also life after loss for you! After the death of a loved one, your life has been changed because of your loss. Over time, your grief will change, too. It will soften. You will not always feel as you do at this moment. But just because your life has changed, this doesn’t mean it is ruined. There is hope and healing.

How Long Does Grief Last?

Time alone does not heal all wounds, but rather what you do with your time that does. Your heart is deeply wounded and it will take time and hard work in order for healing to occur. While there is no set time schedule for the grief process, research shows that *most* grief reactions will be experienced and healed within 2-4 years for an anticipatory loss and 4-7 years for a sudden loss.

More importantly than the question: How long will your grief last, is How willing are you to accept the likelihood of pain and truly work towards healing it?

Make a list of what you need and be willing to accept the help that others offer. Be gentle and patient with yourself and realistic with what you can and simply cannot do at this time. Keep in touch with supportive friends or others who have been in a similar situation. Think about attending a support group.

The 3rd Piece: Learn about Grief

Grief is the normal, natural and appropriate response to the loss of a loved one. It is essential for the healing process. You are not going crazy; you are grieving. You work through the loss of a loved one by moving from the deep pain, intense sorrow and distressing regret to healing, inner peace and even joy. It helps to learn all you can about the grief process. Read literature on grief and loss and watch the newspaper for articles about grief. Check with your church for support and recourses. Look up Web sites that have information on grief. Get on the mailing list for bereavement care newsletters from your cemetery, funeral home and area hospice.

The 4th Piece: Face your Loss

As you grieve, you are going to hurt. Grieving means living with pain. But that pain is the sign that you loved someone and someone loved you. You will always miss them and long to hear their voice one more time and that is okay. You cannot heal what you do not allow your self to feel. Over time, each day will get a little better. Each person’s experience of loss is unique, but there are also common elements of grief. There is no right or wrong way to grieve, no orderly stages of progression. There are, however, healthy and unhealthy ways to cope with your grief. The death of a loved one is the greatest of hurts you will ever endure, and healing is never easy. Grieving takes courage, patience, endurance and faith. And though grieving is healthy and necessary, still it takes a huge toll on your body, mind and soul. So make sure to get proper rest, nutrition and exercise.

The 5th Piece: Work through your Grief

Grief has many different names and faces. Be determined to take time, notice and work through your grief even if others may want to hurry you through it. The funeral and burial may be finished in a week, but grieving goes on for a much longer time. The initial grief reactions of shock and disbelief are not the most painful or enduring ones. The five main grief reactions that usually remain the longest are anger, guilt, fear, sadness and loneliness. As you work through your grief, these acute grief reactions often lessen in intensity and soften. But you will have feelings of grief and will keep having them until you no longer need to. There comes a time in your grief process when you will need to press through your emotions and grief reactions. Do not allow the “whys”, the guilt, or the regret to paralyze you in your grieving. If you do become stuck in your grief or if there is an issue that you cannot resolve, you may want to seek professional help. Also, let your faith help to heal you – in prayer give these unresolved areas to God as a seed and you will discover that God will bring you a harvest.

Healthy Ways of Coping

Some healthy ways of coping can include: talking about your loss, turning to others, encountering your faith, writing in a journal, visiting the grave, looking at photos, honoring your feelings, and taking good care of yourself.

Doing these things often brings with it lots of tears. For both men and women, crying is a natural response to sorrow and can be extremely healing. Crying supports the immune system. It is medically proven that tears of sadness are chemically different from tears of joy. Crying tears of sorrow flushes depressants from the body.

A Letter from our Pastor

Saint Bridget of Kildare Parish

Mary Queen of the Apostles Parish

The Rev. Robert W. Wisniewski, Pastor

Dear Family,

One of the most difficult tasks we face is saying “good bye” to one we have loved. Be that a spouse, a parent, grandparent, beloved uncle or aunt, a son or daughter, a good friend or neighbor, the loss of anyone who has been close to us and important to us will fill us with sadness and grief. We will always remember the good times. But we should not be afraid to also remember the times of challenge because these times, in their own way, contributed to a maturing of our relationship and perhaps even to personal growth. St. Paul reminds us that we should not grieve as those who have no hope. We do grieve, but we grieve with the hope that accompanies our Faith: “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live!” Jesus once asked Martha, Lazarus’ surviving sister, if she believed this. Now he asks us.

I invite you to accept the ministry of the Church at this time of loss. Through the ministry of the Church, Christ reaches out to you to comfort you and heal you. He does not take away your loss, but helps you to look beyond death to the promised day of a grand reunion in his Father’s Kingdom. Hear his voice in the words of Scripture, let him uplift you through the songs of the liturgy, know his presence in those who support you, and receive him once again as the Bread of Life in the Holy Eucharist.

Please know that the care of the Church extends beyond the funeral rites and internment at the cemetery. A member of our Bereavement Ministry will be in touch with you in the weeks and months ahead. Please accept, when you are ready, the invitation to attend our bereavement support groups held at the parish. Finally, know that you are in the prayers of our parish and your deceased loved one will be remembered by name in the petitions at Mass.

If I, or a member of the parish staff, can assist you in any way, please do not hesitate to call the parish office.

In Christ,

Rev. Robert W. Wisniewski Jr.

Rev. Robert W. Wisniewski, Jr.

We Remember, We Celebrate, We Believe

General Information

Catholic Funerals

From the moment of conception to death, human life is sacred. The joy of a new life coming into the world is openly discussed and celebrated, yet we often shun the topic of death. Death, however, when openly embraced as a natural part of the life continuum, can be one of the most beautiful and spiritual moments of our lives.

Jesus presented us with the finest model of how to confront death with dignity, fortitude and hope. Throughout his life, he taught us how to understand death in the context of love, compassion, forgiveness, peace and the assurance of eternal life. As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called upon to imitate Christ when we comfort the sick and dying, walk with those who are grieving, embrace our own mortality and prepare for our own journey home to God.

The deceased and those who mourn their loss need a funeral. The funeral rites are for both the deceased and for the living. The Church responds to this need through the Order of Christian Funerals (OCF). The Order itself uses different rituals for different stations of the funeral and grieving process. Each ritual or rite comprises prayer, scripture, song, gesture, and sacrament that help to express and proclaim the death and resurrection hope that is ours in Jesus Christ the Lord.

In the face of death, the Church confidently proclaims that God has created each person for eternal life and that Jesus, the Son of God, by his death and resurrection, has broken the chains of sin and death that bound humanity.

When Death Occurs

When a loved one dies, the family should call the funeral home. Your funeral director will in turn contact the parish office to arrange the day and time for the funeral and the cemetery for the burial.

*Eternal rest grant unto them, o Lord,
and let perpetual light
shine upon them.
May they rest in peace.
May the souls of all the
faithful departed through
the mercy of God
rest in peace. Amen.*

*“And after you have suffered for a little while,
the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ,
will himself restore, support, strengthen and establish you.”*

- 1Peter 5:10

After Loss—Putting the Pieces Back Together

Life and death are partners. At some point, all of us will face death: our own as well as those we love. To lose a loved one through death always causes changes for us and for our lives. Life is about change. Sometimes it is painful. Sometimes it is beautiful. Many times it can be both.

After the overwhelming loss of a loved one, it feels like your heart—and your entire world—is completely shattered into pieces. No one asks for life to change this way, but it does. We have no control over death, but we do have control over how we respond to death. How we respond is what counts. After a loss, we find out who we are as we go about putting the pieces of ourselves and our lives back together.

The 1st Piece: Recognize the Loss

If grief is to be healed, it must be identified, acknowledged, felt, and expressed. Grief only destroys us when we deny it or refuse to deal with it. Admit and honor your feelings of loss. The psychologist and spiritual writer Henri Nouwen counsels that “The only feelings that do not heal are the ones you hide.” Therefore, the only cure for grief is to grieve. It is as simple and as difficult as that. To begin grieving, you need to accept the full reality of your loss – in both the big and all the little ways. The primary loss is that of your loved one; however, this also created a host of secondary losses as well. You need to identify all the losses that the death of your loved one involves. Make a list and identify all your losses so you know exactly what you are dealing with.

The 2nd Piece: Express the Loss

Initially, a very cathartic step in the healing process is to tell and retell the story of your loss, with all of its pain. We need to experience the pain and express it in order to heal. Pain and emotional feelings are a part of the healing process. Sharing your loss helps to ease that pain. You can share your loss by talking, writing, crying and praying. Grief is not a problem that we fix or solve, but an experience that we must embrace and express in order to heal. Grieving is not something that must be done alone either. Ask for help from your family, friends, church and professional agencies. Don’t always wait for others to offer help or to read your mind.

Common Grief Reactions

When grieving a loss, it is normal to experience any of the following:

- Shock/Disbelief/Numbness
- Loneliness/Emptiness
- Fear/Anxiety
- Anger/Hostility
- Deep Sadness/Situational Depression
- A Lack of Purpose
- A Lack of Energy and Inability to Concentrate
- Change in Eating Habits
- Change in Sleeping Habits
- Guilt/Regret/Relief
- Searching
- Envy of Others
- Strengthening or Weakening of Faith
- Acceptance/Survival/Healing

General Intercessions (Petitions)

***Our response will be:
Lord, hear our prayer.***

In baptism **N.** received the light of Christ. Scatter the darkness now and lead **him/her** over the waters of death. We pray to the Lord:

Lord, hear our prayer.

Our **brother/sister N.** was nourished at the table of the Savior. Welcome **him/her** into the halls of the heavenly banquet. We pray to the Lord:

Lord, hear our prayer.

Many friends and members of our families have gone before us and await the kingdom. Grant them an everlasting home with your Son. We pray to the Lord:

Lord, hear our prayer.

Those who trusted in the Lord now sleep in the Lord. Give refreshment, rest, and peace to all whose faith is known to you alone. We pray to the Lord:

Lord, hear our prayer.

The family and friends of **N.** seek comfort and consolation. Heal their pain and dispel the darkness and doubt that come from grief. We pray to the Lord:

Lord, hear our prayer.

We are assembled here in faith and confidence to pray for our **brother/sister N.** Strengthen our hope so that we may live in the expectation of your Son's coming. We pray to the Lord:

Lord, hear our prayer.

Cremation

The Roman Catholic position concerning the practice of cremation underwent significant change in 1963. The absolute restriction was changed not to condemn the actual practice but to focus upon the reasons that may underlie the practice. Church law now state that: “Funeral rites are to be granted to those who have chosen cremation, unless there is evidence that their choice was indicated by anti-Christian motives” (Ordo Exsequiarum, #15).

The Church's decision to allow cremation recognizes the fact that sometimes cremation best meets the needs of the family. It is not however the preferred burial option. The Catholic Church has always had the utmost respect and reverence for the human body, therefore, the cremains should be interred in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum. The practice of scattering cremains or keeping them at home in an urn are not the reverent disposition that the Church requires.

Times for Funeral Masses

According to diocesan guidelines, funeral Masses can be held on any day of the year except a Sunday, a Holy Day or during the Sacred Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday).

The usual time for funerals is 10:00AM.

Mass Program Booklets

Funeral programs are not necessary since most hymns selected for funerals may be found in our missalettes. However, should you desire to develop and print a program you are welcome to do so. We ask that you do follow copyright laws when designing the program. If you need assistance in this area, please contact our Music Director.

Liturgical Ministers

Family members are invited to participate in the rituals of the Order of Christian Funerals in a variety of ways. The degree of participation, however, is left up to your family. For the most part, family members have found that actively participating in the various rites, has been a source of grace and consolation to them. Although many do find this helpful, others find it is more than they can manage. If that be the case, allow the pastor and the parish's bereavement team to minister for you. They are there to serve you so that you may mourn in the way that is best for you.

If you do not choose to have a family member or friend serve as a lector (reader) for the scripture readings and intercessions (petitions), we will automatically have these ministers serve at your funeral Mass.

****N.—denotes to insert the deceased person's first name into the intercession.***

Stipends

Typically, a portion of the fees paid to the funeral home is used to cover the services of the musician (\$175.00) and the church (\$200.00). *Narthex service (\$75.00).

Memorial Masses

Masses for the intention of the deceased can be requested, based on availability, through our parish office. The usual stipend for these Masses is \$10.00.

Memorial Offerings

You may also honor your loved one by making a donation to the church, school, liturgical fund or parish endowment fund. Your consideration and donation is a beautiful way to express your love for the faithful departed by honoring them with a gift for the parish in their memory.

You may also wish to encourage family and friends to make memorial gifts to the parish, too. These gifts are received in the name of the one who has died, and the immediate family is notified of the these gifts.

The Order of Christian Funerals

A Christian funeral is celebrated in three separate, yet sequential stations of prayer in which the faith community gathers together to pray for the deceased, comfort those who mourn, bury the deceased’s body and commend their soul to the Lord: **The Vigil for the Deceased** (commonly called the wake), **The Funeral Liturgy** (usually Mass, but not always), and **The Rite of Committal** (or burial).

All these stations and rites may be adapted in light of the circumstances surrounding the death of the person and the situation of the family.

The Vigil for the Deceased

The vigil or wake takes place at the funeral home usually the day or evening before the burial. The wake is a special time for family, friends, and the community to gather together to honor, remember and say goodbye to the deceased. Through the Order of Christian Funerals, it is also a time to pray, to read scripture, to remember, and to comfort.

Traditionally, it has been the custom to pray the Rosary at the vigil service. Although the Rosary is an appropriate prayer for those who are grieving, it should not replace the vigil service. It may be said separately, by the family, in addition to the vigil.

The Funeral Liturgy

At the funeral liturgy, we bring the body of our loved one back to the church one last time.

Music Suggestions for Funeral Mass

Below are listed the titles for some of the many songs that are appropriate for funeral liturgies. Secular music is not permitted during the sacred liturgy, but may be used at a fitting time during the wake. Again, if you do not wish to select all the music, our music director will provide appropriate songs for Mass.

Gathering Songs

(The following hymns can also be used as Closing Songs)

- Be Not Afraid
- Christ Be Beside Me
- Crown Him with Many Crowns
- Here I Am, Lord
- Hosea
- Lord of All Hopefulness
- The King of Kings, Christ Jesus Reigns
- To Jesus Christ, Our Sovereign King

Offertory (Presentation of the Gifts) Songs

- Ave Maria
- Eye Has Not Seen
- Hail Mary: Gentle Woman
- Open My Eyes
- Prayer of St. Francis
- Shepherd Me, O God
- The King of Love My Shepherd Is
- Transfigure Us, O Lord

Communion Songs

- Blest Are They
- Center of My Life
- Christ, Be Our Light
- Eat this Bread
- I Am the Bread of Life
- Keep in Mind
- Luke 1: Magnificat
- Look Beyond
- Lord, Who at Thy First Eucharist
- Now We Remain
- One Bread One Body
- Song of the Body of Christ
- Table of Plenty
- Taste and See
- The Supper of the Lord
- To Be Your Bread
- Ubi Caritas
- Unless a Grain of Wheat
- We Are Many Parts
- We Remember

Closing Songs

(The following hymns can also be used as Gathering Songs)

- Amazing Grace
- Hail, Redeemer, King Divine
- How Great Thou Art
- On Eagle’s Wings
- Prayer of St. Francis
- Sing with All the Saints in Glory





(B-8) A reading from the Second Letter of Paul to Timothy (2Timothy 2:8-13)

Remember that Jesus Christ, a descendant of David, was raised from the dead. This is the gospel I preach; in preaching it I suffer as a criminal, even to the point of being thrown into chains, but there is no chaining the word of God! Therefore I bear with all of this for the sake of those whom God has chosen, in order that they may obtain the salvation to be found in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory. You can depend on this:

If we have died with him we shall also live with him; if we hold out to the end we shall also reign with him.. But if we deny him he will deny us. If we are unfaithful he will still remain faithful; for he cannot deny himself. The Word of the Lord.

(B-9) A reading from the First Letter of John (1 John 3:1-2)

See what love the Father has bestowed on us in letting us be called children of God! Yet that in fact is what we are. The reason that the world does not recognize us is that it never recognized the Son. Dearly beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall later be has not yet come to light. We know that when it comes to light we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. The Word of the Lord.

(B-10) A reading from the Book of Revelation (Revelation 21:1-7)

I, John, saw new heavens and a new earth. The former heavens and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no longer. I also saw a new Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God, beautiful as a bride prepared to meet her husband.

I heard a loud voice from the throne cry out: "This is God's dwelling among humanity. He shall dwell with them and they shall be his people, and he shall be their God who is always with them.. He shall wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, crying out or pain, for the former world has passed away." The One who sat on the throne said to me, "See, I make all things new! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To anyone who thirsts I will give to drink without cost from the spring of life-giving water. He who wins the victory shall inherit these gifts; I will be his God and he shall be my son." The Word of the Lord.

Just as they were welcomed at the church door on the day of baptism, washed free of sin in the font and clothed in the white robe of redemption, so now we welcome the body back into the church one final time. We sprinkle the casket with holy water and clothe it in the white cloth (pall) - a reminder of the baptismal garment.

The Church also uses traditional Christian symbols of incense as a sign of honor to the body of the deceased, which became a temple of the Holy Spirit at baptism and the Paschal candle to remind us of the Lord's victory over death and the Lord's continued presence in our midst.

The Rite of Committal

The final station of the Order of Christian Funerals is the Rite of Committal which usually takes place at the cemetery. Following the funeral liturgy, the body is taken in procession to the place of interment. This is the faith community's last act in caring for the body of the deceased. Special prayers and readings are celebrated committing the body to the earth and the life of the deceased person to God. Through this rite, we express our hope that those marked with the sign of faith in baptism will indeed experience the glory of the resurrection.

Conclusion

At the time of death, our parish seeks to comfort and console those who mourn the passing of one who is loved into eternal life. We celebrate the gift of the deceased's life and pray in intercession. It is a time of great emotion and requires that appropriate rites be celebrated. Our culture and society influences aspects of our lives and at times conflict with our beliefs and practices as Catholic Christians. We earnestly desire that all understand our funeral rites and seek to assist you in understanding any conflicts. The richness of the liturgy provides us with the opportunity to adapt the rites so that they may speak a message of consolation to those who mourn and to praise God for the gift of life.

By facing death, and preparing for it physically, emotionally and spiritually, we can live out our days in peace. As followers of Jesus Christ, we give testimony to his life and death and find our hope by trusting in his resurrection. Then, with a sense of peace, we are able to live fully, even while we are facing death, because we realize the truth of the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, "that it is in dying that we are born to eternal life."

*"I am the resurrection and the life;
whoever believes in me, even if he dies,
will live, and everyone who lives
and believes in me will never die."*

-John 11:25

Planning The Mass of Christian Burial

Funeral Liturgy

Introductory Rites

Greeting and Sprinkling with Holy Water

[Placing of the Pall]

Entrance Procession

[Placing of Christian Symbols]

Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

Reading I

Responsorial Psalm (Organist/Cantor & Funeral Choir)

Reading II

Gospel and Homily (Presiding Priest)

General Intercessions/Petitions

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Presentation of the Offertory Gifts

Prayer over the Gifts

Eucharistic Prayer

Communion Rite

Prayer after Communion

Final Commendation

Invitation to Prayer

Song of Farewell

Prayer of Commendation

Procession to the Place of Committal



The areas denoted in **gold face** are moments in the liturgy that family members and friends may minister at Mass. This is optional and if not chosen, the parish will normally schedule and provide altar servers, lector/reader, organist/cantor, funeral choir, and communion ministers.

(B-5) A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans (Romans 14:7-9)

None of us lives as his own master and none of us dies as his own master. While we live we are responsible to the Lord, and when we die we die as his servants. Both in life and in death we are the Lord's. That is why Christ died and came to life again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. We shall all have to appear before the judgment seat of God. It is written, "As surely as I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bend before me and every tongue shall give praise to God." Every one of us will have to give an account of themselves before God. The Word of the Lord.

(B-6) A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 15:51-57)

I am going to tell you a mystery. Not all of us shall fall asleep, but all of us are to be changed in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the sound of the last trumpet. The trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. This corruptible body must be clothed with incorruptibility, this mortal body with immortality. When the corruptible frame takes on incorruptibility and the mortal immortality, then will the saying of Scripture be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and sin gets its power from the law. But thanks be to God who has given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. The Word of the Lord.

(B-7) A reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

We would have you be clear about those who sleep in death, brothers and sisters; otherwise you might yield to grief, like those who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, God will bring forth with him from the dead those also who have fallen asleep believing in him.

We say to you, as if the Lord himself had said it, that we who live, who survive until his coming, will in no way have an advantage over those who have fallen asleep.

No, the Lord himself will come down from heaven at the word of command, at the sound of the archangel's voice and God's trumpet; and those who have died in Christ will rise first. Then we, the living, the survivors, will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

Thenceforth we shall be with the Lord unceasingly. Console one another with this message. The Word of the Lord.

(B-2) A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans (Romans 6:3-9)

Are you not aware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Through baptism into his death we were buried with him, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. If we have been united with him through likeness to his death, so shall we be through a like resurrection.

This we know: our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed and we might be slaves to sin no longer. A person who is dead has been freed from sin. If we have died with Christ, we believe that we are also to live with him. We know that Christ, once raised from the dead, will never die again; death has no more power over him. The Word of the Lord.

(B-3) A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans (Romans 8:14-23)

All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. You did not receive a spirit of slavery leading you back into fear, but a spirit of adoption through which we cry out, “Abba!” (that is, “Father”). The Spirit gives witness with our spirit that we are children of God. But if we are children, we are heirs as well: heirs of God, heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so as to be glorified with him.

I consider the sufferings of the present to be as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed in us. Indeed, the whole created world eagerly awaits the revelation of the children of God. The Word of the Lord.

(B-4) A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans (Romans 8:31-35, 37-39)

If God is for us, who can be against us? Is it possible that he who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for the sake of us all will not grant us all things besides? Who shall bring a charge against God’s chosen ones? God who justifies? Who shall condemn them? Christ Jesus, who died or rather was raised up, who is at the right hand of God and who intercedes for us?

What will separate us from the love of Christ? Trial. Or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or the sword? Yet in all this we are more than conquerors because of him who has loved us. For I am certain that neither death nor life, neither angels nor principalities, neither the present nor the future, nor powers, neither height nor depth, nor any other creature, will be able to separate us from the love of God that comes to us in Christ Jesus, our Lord. The Word of the Lord.

Eulogy

A eulogy is much more appropriate and successful when presented at the wake or luncheon, and not at Mass. Specific references to the deceased will be made during the funeral homily. (Please see the Liturgy Planning Form.)

*“Speak, O Lord,
Your servant is listening.
You have the words of everlasting life.”
-1 Sam 3:9; John 6:68c*

Scripture Readings for Funeral Mass

Although any favorite scripture passage may be chosen, the following suggestions are particularly appropriate for expressing the Christian meaning of death. If you do not wish to select all the readings, the pastor will provide appropriate scriptures for Mass. The Gospel Reading will be selected by the pastor.

Reading I (Old Testament)

(A-1) A reading from the Book of Wisdom (Wisdom 3: 1-9)

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace.

For if before humanity, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality; chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, God proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.

In the time of their visitation they shall shine, and shall dart about as sparks through stubble; they shall judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord shall be their King forever. Those who trust in God shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with God in love: because grace and mercy are with God’s holy ones, and God’s care is with the elect. The Word of the Lord.

(A-2) A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 25: 6,7-9)

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples. On this mountain God will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the web that is woven over all nations; God will destroy death forever. The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces; the reproach of his people he will remove from the whole earth, for the Lord has spoken.

On that day it will be said: “Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us! This is the Lord for whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that God has saved us!” The Word of the Lord.

(A-3) A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 49: 8-16)

Thus says the Lord: In the time of favor I answer you, on the day of salvation I help you. Along the ways they shall find pasture, on every bare height shall their pastures be. They shall not hunger or thirst, nor shall the scorching wind or the sun strike them; for God who has compassion for them leads them and guides them beside springs of water.

Sing out, O heavens, and rejoice, O earth, break forth into song, you mountains, For the Lord comforts his people and shows mercy to his afflicted. But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me.” Can a mother forget her infant or the child within her womb? Even if she should forget, I will never forget you. I have carved you on the palm of my hand. The Word of the Lord.

(A-4) A reading from the Book of Lamentations (Lamentations 3: 17-26)

My soul is deprived of peace, I have forgotten what happiness is; I tell myself my future is lost, all that I hoped for from the Lord. The thought of my homeless poverty is wormwood and gall; remembering it over and over leaves my soul downcast within me.

But I will call this to mind, as my reason to have hope: The favors of the Lord are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent; they are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness. My portion is the Lord, says my soul; therefore will I hope in him. Good is the Lord to one who waits for him, to the soul that seeks him; it is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the Lord. The Word of the Lord.

(A-5) A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes (Ecclesiastes 3: 1-12)

There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens.

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant. A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to tear down and a time to build up. A time to weep, and a time to

laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance. A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them; and a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.

A time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to cast away. A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to be silent, and a time to speak. A time to love and a time to hate; a time of war and a time of peace.

What advantage has the worker from their toil? I have considered the task which God has appointed for humanity to be busied about. God has made everything appropriate to its time, and has put the timeless into their hearts, without our ever discovering it, from beginning to end, the work which God has done. I recognize that there is nothing better than to be glad and to do well during life. For everyone to eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labor is a gift from God. I recognize that whatever God does will endure forever. There is no adding to it or taking from it. Thus has God done that God may be revered. The Word of the Lord.



Reading II (New Testament)

(B-1) A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans (Romans 5:5-11)

Hope will not leave us disappointed, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. At the appointed time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for us godless people. It is rare that anyone should lay down his life for a just person, though it is barely possible that for a good person someone may have the courage to die. It is precisely in this that God proves his love for us: that while we were sinners, Christ died for us.

Now that we have been justified by his blood, it is all the more certain that we shall be saved by him from God's wrath. For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him by the death of his Son, it is all the more certain that we who have been reconciled will be saved by his life. Not only that; we go so far as to make God our boast through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. The Word of the Lord.