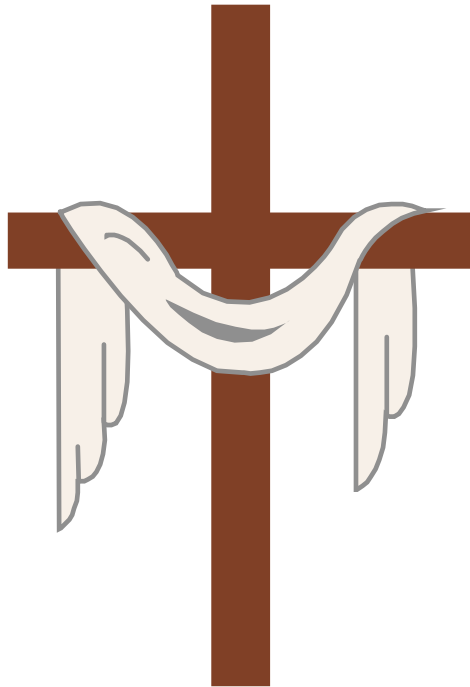


*Bury my body where you will;  
the care of it should not concern you  
One thing only I ask of you,  
that you remember me at the Table of the Lord.*

St. Monica



## *A Guidebook for Planning Funerals*

### *Visitation Parish*

*Sacred Heart Church  
Manchester-by-the-Sea, MA*

*Saint John the Baptist Church  
Essex, MA*

*(978) 526-1263 Parish Office  
(978) 526-4335 Parish Fax*

Dear Family and Friends of the Deceased:

As pastor of Visitation Parish - Sacred Heart Church, Manchester-by-the-Sea, MA and Saint John the Baptist Church, Essex, MA, along with the people of the parishes, I first would like to extend my sympathy to you and your family for the death of your loved one. Please be assured that your loved one will be remembered in our Masses and prayers.

The death of a Christian must be understood in the context of our faith. We profess that the death of a Christian reminds us that for the deceased "life has changed, not ended". Through our death we fulfill our life on earth and enter into eternal life. For a Christian; our life and death finds meaning in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. We are born into the life of Christ through our Baptism and are welcomed into the community of faith. Because through Baptism we are united with Christ and the community of faith, our death is a communal event for the parish family.

The time between death and the rites of the funeral are often times of shock, bewilderment and grief. In the light of our faith, we offer the following information to help you plan the Rite of Christian Burial. While these guidelines are general in nature, please feel free to seek our assistance in planning for your particular needs and circumstances.

The Vigil, or wake, is an opportunity to begin the public grieving process. The Vigil is a time for the family, friends and community of the deceased to come together and begin to grieve. The family may wish to use personal mementos to honor the memory of the departed, pictures, sharing of memories, reflecting on the life of the deceased begins the healing process.

During the Vigil, the church will gather in prayer by offering the Vigil Service. A minister from the parish will offer this service. This rite allows us to place the death of a loved one clearly in the light of faith.

Central to the rites of the church is the Funeral Liturgy or the Mass of Christian Burial. As Catholics, the Eucharist is central to our lives. This rite is marked by the welcoming of the remains into the church, hearing the Word of God, the Celebration of the Eucharist, and the farewell or the Rite of Commendation.

The body is greeted at the entrance of the church and blessed with holy water. This recalls that the deceased was welcomed into the church through Baptism and our uniting with Christ through all eternity. St. Paul reminds us that we put on Christ in our baptism and clothed into everlasting life. The body is then clothed with the funeral pall. This is a reminder of the white garment that every baptized member is clothed in. This is often done by members of the family. Other Christian symbols may be placed on the coffin, a cross, bible, etc. if they are the honest expression of the person's life.

In this booklet, you will find the appropriate scripture readings for the Mass. If a member of the family, is a reader in their parish or a good public speaker, they may wish to offer a reading from the Old Testament and from the New Testament. In selecting readers. Please bear in mind that this is a public ministry and the reader must be living a life in harmony with the scripture they proclaim. Please also remember that this is an extremely emotional time and the emotions of the reader must also be taken into consideration.

The priest will proclaim the Gospel for the Mass. If you wish to make a particular suggestion, please inform the priest.

After the priest preaches the Homily will be the Prayers of the Faithful. If you wish to add any close relative of the deceased; (husband, wife, child parent, etc.) to these prayers, please inform the priest.

The gifts for the Eucharist, bread and wine, may be brought up by two to four members of the family.

After the distribution of the Eucharist, one family member may offer a brief reflection. The guidelines of the Archdiocese state that it may only be five minutes long and reflect on the life of faith of the deceased. If there are others that wish to speak, these reflections may be offered at the funeral home or at the mercy meal. Please see the section entitled "Words of Remembrance" for suggestions and guidance.

Following the Mass of Christian Burial, if there is to be a burial, the procession will go to the cemetery. Prayers will be offered at the grave. These prayers help us entrust our loved one to the care of the Lord and offer us the hope that one day we will join with them in everlasting life.

Music is integral to any celebration of our faith, and by nature must be sacred music. Music, by its very nature, touches us at a deeper level than mere words. As this is a public celebration of our faith, music must enhance our celebration of the Eucharist and honor the life of faith of the deceased. Secular, or popular music, cannot be used during the Mass. This is the policy of the Archdiocese of Boston. "Favorite songs", that are secular in nature, maybe played at the funeral home, cemetery, or at the collation.

Please be assured of my prayers in your time of loss. If there is any way, I or your parish community, can assist you, please do not hesitate to ask.

In the peace of Christ,

Fr. Paul Flammia

Pastor

Please feel free to contact any member of the Parish Staff to assist you at this time:

Rev. Paul Flammia, Pastor

[FrPaulF@comcast.net](mailto:FrPaulF@comcast.net).

Eric Anderson, Director of Music Ministry

[Diapason32@aol.com](mailto:Diapason32@aol.com)

Darice McIntire, Parish Secretary

[shsjbulletin@comcast.net](mailto:shsjbulletin@comcast.net)

## **Receiving Communion:**

For relatives and friends, there is a natural and strong spiritual reason to receive Communion at a Funeral Mass. The human feeling and need is to be included and not left out. That's also because the Eucharist is "inclusion" and "union" with Jesus and the community of believers.

Traditionally, and for theological reasons, only those Christians who share a belief in the Eucharist and are members of the Church are invited to receive Communion. That also includes Orthodox Christians when allowed by their own tradition. Catholics should remember that along with fasting for an hour, they should be in the "state of grace" i.e. free of serious sin.

## **Cremation:**

The body is to be treated with reverence; because it was consecrated in the waters of Baptism it has an eternal destiny. That is why it is usually brought back to the church for the Funeral Mass. Cremation, when chosen, usually follows the Funeral Mass. Any other option should be carefully discussed with a parish priest or the Presider before a decision is made. Some in the past have hastily rushed to cremation and later felt that something was missing. Finally, when cremation is chosen, the Catholic tradition insists on burial either in a place set aside for cremated remains, a cemetery, or the sea. The remains should not be scattered or divided.

## **Mourning:**

It takes time. Our tradition encourages what is called a "Month's mind Mass", and we remember all the dead during the Month of November. At that time every year, we invite all families to a Memorial Mass for those who died during the past year. Most families also arrange for a yearly Memorial Mass around the anniversary of death or burial.

Support groups exist in the parish and in the area for those experiencing loss. We can arrange to provide support and help.

## **Memorial Gifts**

Many people wish to memorialize a loved one by directing donations to various charities and organizations. Donations may be made to either parish and are used to provide for the Liturgical needs of the parish. If you wish to make a memorial gift to the parish please contact the pastor for more information.

## Words of Remembrance (Eulogy):

To “speak well” of someone is to eulogize that person. The Funeral Liturgy is about our faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Therefore, any words of remembrance about the deceased should be about the person's life and the living out of that life of faith, by loving God and loving neighbor. Reflections may be offered at the Wake, Cemetery, or at the end of the Mass, before the Final Commendation. The following guidelines are observed in the Archdiocese of Boston since 2001 and in many other parts of the Catholic world.

- *The eulogist should be carefully chosen to speak in the name of your family. Someone with experience will enhance the moment. One family member or friend should be asked to speak. It is the policy of the Archdiocese that there is only one eulogist.*
- *The eulogist needs to “speak well” of the deceased’s character and faith because it is part of a religious ritual.*
- *The eulogy is to be written out and kept brief, which is about 4 minutes and no more than 5 minutes. The eulogist often concludes by thanking all those in attendance and inviting everyone to a reception following the burial.*
- *Avoid inside jokes and forms of humor that could easily be misunderstood.*
- *The Priest/Presider is available to help with the eulogy. He is available to it before the day of the Funeral Mass.*
- *During the preparation and delivery of your remembrances-PRAY. Pray that you will do honor for your loved one's memory and that words will be a witness to the faith and blessing that your loved one was.*
- *If you have been asked to speak, but are unaccustomed to public speaking, or feel that emotions may hinder your ability to honor the deceased, do not hesitate to respectfully decline the task.*

## **Musical Selections**

Integral to the any Liturgical Celebration in the Church is Sacred Music. Music by its very nature touches us at the deepest level and is more than simply words. Music at the celebration of a funeral is of utmost importance: it enhances the celebration of the Liturgy and lifts the burden of grief and loss.

Many times, songs are requested that are truly not appropriate during the Funeral Liturgy, and need not be ruled out for use as background music at the Funeral Home, or at the gravesite.

In accordance with the guidelines established by the Archdiocese of Boston and the accepted norms of the universal Church, "popular music" is not appropriate , and unfortunately, cannot be considered.

The Music Ministries of Sacred Heart and St. John the Baptist Parishes respects that this time of grief, and offer their sincerest condolences to the family of the deceased. In keeping with the beautiful Catholic tradition of Liturgy, It is our objective and desire that this Liturgy be as beautiful and meaningful as possible.

The following list of hymns are the most commonly requested hymns, it is not exhaustive, but merely is a guide. Some of the songs are interchangeable for their placement during the Liturgy. Please remember that all music that is used during the Liturgy must be in keeping with the Archdiocesan and National Bishops' Conference Guidelines. Popular, show tunes, and other non-liturgical music arrangements are not allowed. These may be used at the wake or graveside.

The following are music selections that are appropriate to the Catholic Funeral Liturgy:

Select one ( 1) from each of the following headings and indicate your selections on the sheet in the rear of the booklet.

### **ENTRANCE HYMNS:**

**I Heard the Voice of Jesus  
Here I am Lord  
Be Not Afraid  
Amazing Grace**

### **RESPONSORIAL PSALMS:**

**To You O Lord - Soper  
Psalm 23: (The Lord is My Shepherd)  
Shepherd Me O' God  
Psalm 91: (Be With Me Lord)- Haas or Joncas  
Psalm 103: (The Lord is Kind and Merciful) -Haugen or Cotter  
Psalm 27: The Lord is my Light - Haas**

### **PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS:**

**O God You Search Me  
Psalm 42: As the Deer Longs  
Amazing Grace  
Give Me Jesus\*  
Because the Lord is My Shepherd  
Prayer of St. Francis\*  
The King of Love My Shepherd Is\*  
I Am the Bread of Life\***

Eye Has Not Seen\*  
Like a Child Rests\*  
Center of My Life\*  
Precious Lord, Take My Hand\*

*(\*Some of the above songs are appropriate in other places; e.g. Communion, Recessional, etc.).*

#### COMMUNION HYMN:

You Are Mine\*  
On Eagles Wings\*  
How Great Thou Art\*  
Taste and See  
Restless is the Heart  
Blest Are They\*

*(\*Some of the above songs are appropriate in other places; e.g.-Presentation, Recessional, etc.).*

#### SONG OF FAREWELL:

Song of Farewell  
Remember Me  
J'irai la voir un jour

#### RECESSIONAL HYMN:

I Know that My Redeemer Lives  
How Great Thou Art  
Be Not Afraid  
O Loving God (Londonderry Air Tune)  
Eternal Father, Strong to Save  
We Will Rise Again

Other hymns may be used, and in some cases, some selections are interchangeable. The use and appropriate placement of the selections within the Liturgy, will be at the discretion of the Music Director.

## **Scripture Readings**

The following section contains the Scripture Readings. The first group of Scripture readings are Old Testament (OT) while the next group are from the New Testament (NT), especially the letters of St Paul and St John. The last group is from the four Gospels.

You may choose one reading from the OT grouping and one from the NT grouping. If you decide to choose only one reading, please take it from the NT grouping. The same lector may do both or you may choose to have 2 lectors. Lectors need to be prepared and rehearsed.

## Funeral Guidelines Checklist

- \_\_\_\_\_ Family member designated to meet and finalize plans with the parish priest
- \_\_\_\_\_ Scriptures reviewed and chosen
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lector(s) chosen, readings given and informed of rehearsal
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eulogist chosen and given a copy of guidelines
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gift bearers (bread and wine) chosen
- \_\_\_\_\_ Music reviewed and chosen
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eucharistic Ministers (if needed for a large Funeral Mass)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Greeters/Ushers to welcome congregation at a large funeral
- \_\_\_\_\_ Optional use of parish hall (when available) for reception
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plan a Month's Mind Mass
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other



# The Funeral Mass

Deceased \_\_\_\_\_

Funeral Day and Time \_\_\_\_\_

If deceased was known by another name: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Scripture Readings**

*Please Print and use booklet and note the Reading Number, Citation, and Readers Name.*

**1- Old Testament** (one choice): \_\_\_\_\_

Lector: \_\_\_\_\_

**2 - New Testament** (one choice): \_\_\_\_\_

Lector: \_\_\_\_\_

**Gospel Selection:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Preparation of Gifts**

Gift Bearers: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Eucharistic Minister:** (if needed) \_\_\_\_\_

**Eulogist** - Name and Phone number

\_\_\_\_\_

**Notes and Comments** (add any information or comments that the Presider might need to better serve your family)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***Please return this form to the Priest or Funeral Home one day before the funeral.***

## Funeral Music Selections

*Please return form to Rectory, Music Director or Funeral Director  
at least a day before the Funeral.*

**Eric Anderson Organist and Director of Music**  
**[Diapason32@aol.com](mailto:Diapason32@aol.com) - 617-974-5948**

### Entrance Hymns:

- ☐ I Heard the Voice of Jesus
- ☐ Here I Am, Lord
- ☐ Be Not Afraid
- ☐ Amazing Grace

### Responsorial Psalms:

- ☐ To You, O Lord
- ☐ Psalm 23: The Lord is My Shepherd
- ☐ Shepherd Me, O God
- ☐ Psalm 27: The Lord is My Light
- ☐ Psalm 91: Be With Me Lord
- ☐ Psalm 103: The Lord is Kind and Merciful

### Presentation of the Gifts:

- ☐ O God You Search Me
- ☐ Psalm 42: As the Deer Longs
- ☐ Amazing Grace
- ☐ Give Me Jesus\*
- ☐ Because the Lord is My Shepherd\*
- ☐ Prayer of St. Francis\*
- ☐ The King of Love My Shepherd Is\*
- ☐ I Am the Bread of Life\*
- ☐ Precious Lord, Take My Hand\*
- ☐ Like a Child Rests\*
- ☐ Center of My Life\*
- ☐ Eye Has Not Seen\*

\* *Some of the above songs are also  
appropriate in other places, e.g., Communion,  
Parting, etc.*

### Communion Hymn:

- ☐ You Are Mine\*
- ☐ On Eagles Wings\*
- ☐ How Great Thou Art\*
- ☐ Taste and See
- ☐ Unless a Grain of Wheat\*
- ☐ Restless is the Heart
- ☐ Blest Are They\*

\* *Some of the above songs are also appropriate in  
other places, e.g., Presentation, Parting, etc.*

### Hymn of Farewell:

- ☐ Song of Farewell (Sands)
- ☐ Jesus Remember Me
- ☐ J'irai la voir

### Recessional Hymns:

- ☐ I Know that My Redeemer Lives
- ☐ How Great Thou Art
- ☐ Be Not Afraid
- ☐ O Loving God
- ☐ Eternal Father Strong to Save
- ☐ We Will Rise Again