

Prepare for the Day

As the day of the funeral approaches, completing a few final preparations can help the family feel more comfortable and allow everyone to focus on prayer, remembrance, and supporting one another.

1. Confirm the Schedule

Review the final arrangements with the funeral director and parish.

Confirm:

- ☐ Date and time of the Vigil, if applicable
- ☐ Funeral Mass or Funeral Liturgy time
- ☐ Family arrival time at the church
- ☐ Location and time of the Rite of Committal
- ☐ Reception or gathering following the funeral
- ☐ Transportation and procession arrangements

2. Confirm Family Participants

Make sure everyone participating understands their role and where they need to be.

Confirm:

- ☐ Pallbearers
- ☐ Lectors
- ☐ Gift bearers
- ☐ Family members placing the pall
- ☐ Those participating in the Vigil
- ☐ Anyone offering approved words of remembrance
- ☐ Family members responsible for coordinating special needs

The parish coordinator can help explain what each participant should do.

3. Review Readings and Music

Take a final moment to review the selections for the liturgy.

Confirm:

- ☐ Scripture readings
- ☐ Responsorial Psalm
- ☐ Music for the Entrance Procession
- ☐ Preparation of the Gifts

- ☐ Communion music
- ☐ Song of Farewell
- ☐ Recessional music
- ☐ Names of musicians and cantors

If family members are serving as lectors, encourage them to review and practice the readings beforehand.

4. Prepare for Arrival at the Church

Ask the funeral director or parish coordinator where family members should gather before the liturgy.

Helpful questions include:

- Where should the family park?
- Where should family members assemble?
- When should we arrive?
- Who will greet and guide us?
- Where will immediate family sit?
- Are there accommodations for elderly or disabled guests?

Allow extra time so the family does not feel rushed.

5. Prepare the Funeral Program

If a worship aid or printed program is being used, make sure it is complete and approved.

It may include:

- Name of the deceased
- Photograph, if desired
- Order of the liturgy
- Scripture references
- Music selections
- Names of participants
- Information about the Rite of Committal
- Reception information

Confirm who is responsible for printing and bringing the programs to the church.

6. Coordinate Personal and Practical Items

Before the day of the funeral, confirm arrangements for:

- ☐ Flowers
- ☐ Memorial photographs or displays
- ☐ Prayer cards
- ☐ Guest book

- ☐ Military or organizational honors, if applicable
- ☐ Livestreaming or recording
- ☐ Accessibility needs
- ☐ Childcare or assistance for young family members
- ☐ Weather considerations for the cemetery

Check with the parish regarding any items that may be brought into or displayed in the church.

7. Prepare for the Rite of Committal

Confirm the final arrangements with the funeral home and cemetery.

Review:

- ☐ Cemetery or columbarium location
- ☐ Directions
- ☐ Expected arrival time
- ☐ Clergy or lay minister who will lead the rite
- ☐ Pallbearers or others participating
- ☐ Military honors, if applicable
- ☐ Flowers or other arrangements at the gravesite
- ☐ Seating or accessibility needs

8. Take Care of Yourself and One Another

Funeral days can be emotionally and physically demanding. Try to keep practical demands as simple as possible.

Consider:

- Eating and drinking water
- Getting as much rest as possible
- Assigning practical tasks to trusted family members or friends
- Allowing someone else to handle last-minute questions
- Giving yourself permission to step away if needed
- Accepting help from parish staff, friends, and family

You do not have to manage every detail yourself.

A Final Reminder

The purpose of these preparations is not to make the day perfect. They are meant to help the family enter the funeral with fewer concerns about logistics and more freedom to **pray, remember, grieve, and place your loved one into God's loving care.**