



Funeral Planning Guide



If you should have any questions or concerns about this planning process, please contact:

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This guide is meant to offer consolation and hope. Its purpose is to aid in the preparation of the funeral service for a loved one or in pre-planning your own funeral. Hopefully, you will find it a practical guide in regard to the funeral Mass and burial.

Customs surrounding death change and evolve over the years. The information offered here is based on the Catholic Church's Order of Christian Funerals commissioned by our American Bishops and approved by the Vatican in 1989. Thus, it is the "official" Rite of Burial.

Included in the booklet is the general format for the Funeral Mass. In planning the Mass, you will find readings and hymns from which to choose. It is recommended that you complete the center pages in the booklet and give a copy to your family, the parish office and funeral director to be kept on file. This will allow everyone to respect your wishes. This plan will be reviewed with the family by a member of the St. John's Pastoral Staff at the time of the funeral.

May God bless you,

St. John the Baptist Catholic Parish Pastoral Staff

*"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."
— Matthew 5:4*



THE VIGIL SERVICE

The preferred preparation for the funeral is a Vigil or “Wake”, which is usually celebrated the evening before. (The gathering is so-called from the traditional practice of staying awake to watch over the body of a dead person.) The Vigil Service is the time when the life of the deceased is remembered as God’s gift and an opportunity to share this memory with family and friends.

The revised Order of Christian Funerals has formulated a ritual to celebrate the Vigil Service in a prayerful way. It is a time to gather and read scripture, reflect, pray, share condolences and celebrate the life of the loved one. The Vigil Service is the appropriate time for the eulogy and testimonies about the life of the deceased.

The new Rite of the Catholic Church does not allow for the recitation of the rosary or chaplet during the Vigil Service. However, the rosary or chaplet of Divine Mercy may be prayed any other time the family desires at the funeral home. A family member, friend, volunteer from the parish or a church minister may lead the rosary or chaplet of Divine Mercy.

The Vigil Service Order of Worship

Priest, Deacon or Pastoral Associate presides

- * Greeting and Welcome
- * Invitation to Prayer
- * First Reading
- * Psalm Response
- * Second Reading
- * Gospel Reading
- * Reflection
- * Optional Sharing of Memories by family/friends
- * Prayers of the Faithful
- * The Lord’s Prayer
- * Blessing



THE FUNERAL MASS

The Funeral Mass is ordinarily held in the parish where the deceased was a member. For most believers, the parish community is the focus for much of their Christian life and the usual place where people celebrate and deepen their faith. Here they find the support and sharing for their growth in faith and in commitment to a Christian life. For these reasons, the funeral takes place in the church.

Staking our lives on the hope of resurrection assured to us by Jesus Christ, we believe that our death is the doorway to a new way of living with God. Baptism celebrates the beginning of our life in Christ and our commitment to God’s ways throughout our lives. The funeral ritual celebrates one’s earthly life in faithful relationship with God and looks toward the promise of existence with God forever. The funeral then, is both an important celebration of the deceased believer’s life and an expression and reaffirmation of the faith of the community.

At the funeral liturgy, we bring the body of our loved one back to the church. Just as he or she was 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, we welcome his or her body back into the church at this time. We sprinkle the casket with holy water and clothe it in the white cloth (pall) —a reminder of the Baptismal garment.

Following are added notes pertaining to the Funeral Mass:

- The songs at the funeral are to be sacred. Our priest, pastoral associate or parish music director is available to assist you in choosing appropriate songs. (See list of suggested songs.)
- The readings for Mass are taken from the Order of Christian Funerals. (See the list of readings.)
- It is not mandatory that you designate persons to participate as Lectors,
- Eucharistic Ministers or Gift Bearers. These responsibilities can be taken care of by the parish staff or designees.



Funeral Planning Worksheet

Liturgical Selections:

First Reading: _____

Second Reading: _____

Gospel Reading: _____

Opening Song: _____

Responsorial Psalm: _____

Offertory Song: _____

Communion Songs: _____

Closing Song/Recessional: _____

Additional Notes: _____

Name of Deceased _____

Date of Funeral _____ Time _____

Contact info for family member(s): _____

Presiding Priest _____

Funeral Home _____

Visitation Funeral home: Date & Times _____

Church: Date & Times _____

Memorial (vigil) service at funeral home? ____ YES ____ NO

Time: _____ Presider at service _____

Bereavement Meal:

____ YES Approximate number of guests: _____

____ NO food is needed, family declined.

Livestream Mass? ____ YES ____ NO

Name of Cemetery or Mausoleum: _____

Memorial contribution designations: _____

Participants in Liturgy (family members, friends):

Lectors _____

Prayers of the Faithful _____

Altar Servers _____

Gift Bearers _____

Eucharistic Ministers _____

Paul Bearers _____

Other Participants with details _____

SUGGESTED READINGS

Old Testament Readings (First Reading) (Choose One)

- ___ Job19:1,23-27 (I know that my Redeemer lives)
- ___ Wisdom 3:1-9 or 3:1-6,9-Short form (The souls of the just are in the hand of God)
- ___ Wisdom 4:7-15 (God’s care is with us)
- ___ Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9 (The Lord God will destroy death forever)
- ___ Lamentations 3:17-26 (Hope in the Lord)
- ___ Daniel 12:1-3 (The just will shine like stars)
- ___ Maccabees 12:43-46 (A splendid reward awaits us)
- ___ OTHER Old Testament Reading_____

New Testament Readings (Second Reading) (Choose One)

- ___ Acts10:34-43 or 10:34-36, 42-43 (God has appointed Jesus as judge for everyone)
- ___ Romans 5:5-11 (God gives us hope)
- ___ Romans 5:17-21 (Jesus brings us life)
- ___ Romans 6:3-9 or 6:3-4, 8-9– Short form (Let us walk in newness of life)
- ___ Romans 8:14-23 (Those that are led by the Spirit of God are children of God)
- ___ Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39 (Who can ever come between us and the love of Christ?)
- ___ Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12 (Whether alive or dead, we belong to the Lord)
- ___ 1 Corinthians 15:20-23, 24b-28 or 20-23 (All will be brought to life in Christ)
- ___ 1 Corinthians 15:51-57 (Death is swallowed up in victory)
- ___ 2 Corinthians 4:14-15:1 (What is seen is transitory; what is unseen is eternal)
- ___ 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10 (We have an everlasting home in heaven)
- ___ Philippians 3:20-21 (We will be remade in Christ)
- ___ Thessalonians 4:13-18 (We shall stay with the Lord forever)
- ___ 2 Timothy 2:8-13 (If we have died with Him, we shall live with Him)
- ___ 1 John 3:1-2 (We shall see God as He really is)
- ___ 1 John 3:14-16 (We have passed from death to life)
- ___ Revelation 14:13 (Happy are those who die in the Lord)
- ___ Revelation 20:11-21:1 (The dead have been judged according to their works)
- ___ Revelation 21:1-5a, 6b-7 (There will be no more death)
- ___ OTHER New Testament Reading_____

Gospel Readings (Choose one)

- ___ Matthew 5:1-12a (The Beatitudes)
- ___ Matthew 11:25-30 (Come to me...and I will give you rest)
- ___ Matthew 25;1-13 (Stay awake...for you do not know the day nor the hour)
- ___ Matthew 25:31-46 (Come. You whom my Father has blessed)
- ___ Mark 15:33-39; 16:1-6 or 15:33-39 (Jesus breaths his last)
- ___ Luke 7:11-17 (Young man, I say to you, arise)
- ___ Luke 12:35-40 (Be prepared)
- ___ Luke 23:33, 39-43 (Today you will be with me in paradise)
- ___ Luke 23:44-46, 50, 52-53; 24:1-6a or 23:44-46, 50, 52-53 (Father, I put my life in your hands)
- ___ Luke 24:13-35 or 24:13-16, 28-35 (The road to Emmaus)
- ___ John 5:24-29 (Whoever hears my word and believes, has passed from death to life)
- ___ John 6:37-40 (All who believes in the Son will have eternal life)
- ___ John 6:51-58 (All who eat this bread will live forever; and I will raise them up on the last day)
- ___ John 11:17-27 or 11:21-27 (I am the resurrection and the life)
- ___ John 11:32-45 (The raising of Lazarus from the dead)
- ___ John 12:23-28 or 23-26 (If a grain of wheat falls and dies, it yields a rich harvest)
- ___ John 14:1-6 (There are many rooms in my Father’s house)
- ___ John 17:24-26 (Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am)
- ___ John 19:1-18, 25-30 (Jesus dies on the cross)
- ___ OTHER Gospel Reading_____

SUGGESTED SONGS

OPENING SONG/PROCESSIONAL: (Choose one)

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ___ Be Not Afraid | ___ I Know That My Redeemer Lives |
| ___ Here I Am, Lord | ___ Join In The Dance |
| ___ How Great Thou Art | ___ On Eagle’s Wings |
| ___ I Am The Bread of Life | ___ _____ |

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: (sung between readings – Choose one)

- ___ Shepherd Me, O God (Psalm 23)
- “Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life.”
- ___ The Lord Is My Light (Psalm 27)
- “The Lord is my light and my salvation.”
- ___ To You, O Lord (Psalm 25)
- “To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.”

OFFERTORY (OPTIONAL): An instrumental can be used here (Choose one)

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ___ All Is Well with My Soul | ___ Loving and Forgiving |
| ___ Amazing Grace | ___ Prayer of St. Francis |
| ___ Be Not Afraid | ___ Precious Lord, Take My Hand |
| ___ Hosea | ___ These Alone Are Enough |
| ___ I Have Loved You | ___ _____ |

COMMUNION SONG: (Choose one)

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ___ All Is Well with My Soul | ___ On Eagle’s Wings |
| ___ Amazing Grace | ___ Precious Lord, Take My Hand |
| ___ Be Not Afraid | ___ This Alone |
| ___ Here I Am, Lord | ___ We Remember |
| ___ How Great Thou Art | ___ _____ |
| ___ Loving & Forgiving | |

CLOSING SONG/RECESSIONAL: (Choose one)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ___ Holy God, We Praise Thy Name | ___ I Know That My Redeemer Lives |
| ___ How Great Thou Art | ___ On Eagle’s Wings |
| ___ Here I Am, Lord | ___ We Remember |
| ___ How Can I Keep from Singing? | ___ _____ |
| ___ I Am the Bread of Life | |