

Preparing to Celebrate the Funeral Mass

Outline of the Mass

As a source of reference, here is a brief outline of the Catholic funeral rite during Mass. A brief gathering rite serves as an introduction to the Liturgy of the Word. The Liturgy of the Eucharist follows, concluded by the Final Commendation and procession to the place of committal.

FAMILY REMEMBRANCE A time sharing that is optional. One to two people are permitted to share a few brief words of remembrance of 3-5 minutes each.

GATHERING RITE

Greeting

The body of the deceased and the deceased's family are greeted ritually near the church entrance, the pall, a sign of baptism, is placed on the casket.

Gathering/Entrance Song

Opening Prayer

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Not merely readings, the proclamation of the Word is an encounter with God speaking through Scripture. Therefore, non-Biblical readings are not appropriate. Reading choices presented here are the Church's selection of readings for Catholic funerals and are taken from the New American Bible.

Old Testament Reading

Normally a text from the Old Testament (excluding the Psalms) or from specific New Testament selections during the Easter season.

Responsorial Psalm

A musical selection of a Psalm or an appointed Biblical canticle, sung in refrain-verse format.

New Testament Reading

A reading from the letters of Paul or one of the apostles.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel

Proclaimed by the priest from the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

Homily

A reflection on the Scripture passages which have been proclaimed.

General Intercessions

Prayers of the Faithful – prayers for the deceased, the family, and the greater good of the Church and of the world.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST *“Eucharist” is the sacramental encounter with God. The Liturgy of the Eucharist is the ritual action of the words of consecration, Jesus took, blessed, broke, and gave the bread and wine as his Body and Blood.*

Preparation of the Gifts

The altar is prepared, and gifts of bread and wine are brought forward.

Eucharistic Prayer

The central prayer of the Mass.

The Lord's Prayer

The Our Father is best recited, so all gathered can participate.

Breaking of the Bread

The bread is broken accompanied by the “Lamb of God” litany.

Communion

The Body and Blood of Christ are distributed.

Prayer after Communion

FINAL COMMENDATION

Invitation to Prayer

Silent Prayer

A time for individual prayer for the deceased.

Song of Farewell

May be accompanied by the incensing of the body.

Procession to the Place

of Committal