



# **Preparing to Celebrate the Funeral Mass**

**St. Luke's Catholic Parish  
Ocean City, MD**

updated 01/082026

## **Overview**

“Because of our belief not only in the immortality of the soul, but also in the resurrection of the body, the Church professes hope in the face of death and acts with charity in the funeral rites. The Church provides a number of prayers for the faithful to offer both to accompany the dying of a loved one and to strengthen our faith upon their death. Through private prayer and public funeral rites, we strengthen our faith and hope, comfort those who mourn, and bury the bodily remains of the deceased with care befitting what was the Temple of the Holy Spirit.” (USCCB).

As Roman Catholics, the Mass is the highest and most perfect prayer that we as humans can offer to God. Celebration of the Funeral Mass commemorates Jesus’ Life, Death and Resurrection and our belief in the Resurrection and eternal life. As members of the Mystical Body of Christ and the Communion of Saints we believe that death is a transition, not an end. We believe that Jesus rose from the dead. We believe that by dying, He destroyed our death and that by rising, He restored our life. We are participants in the Resurrection, not spectators. This participation began with our Baptism and will continue through the transition of death. As members of the Catholic faith, we believe in the Resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come, which we recite in the Nicene Creed at Mass every Sunday.

Our hearts go out to all those who have lost a loved one. May the passage of time and the hand of the Lord soothe your grief, and may you find comfort in the hope of the Resurrection.

The parish family of St. Luke’s extend our deepest sympathy.

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## **Preparing for the Funeral Mass: Basic Instructions**

Download/print our Funeral Mass Preparation Sheet

Please fill it in completely and legibly.

### Choosing the readings

The readings from the Sacred Scriptures proclaim the Paschal Mystery, teach remembrance of the dead, convey the hope of being gathered into God's Kingdom, and encourage the witness of Christian life. The readings tell of God's design for a world in which suffering and death relinquish their hold on all whom God has called his own. There are (3) readings during the Funeral Mass. The celebrant will choose the Gospel reading, and you may choose the First and Second Readings. The approved selections can be found in this packet. If you are struggling with making a choice, the celebrant can choose the readings for you.

### Choosing the music

When you are choosing the music, consider the choices you make, as it can say a lot about what you and your loved ones believe. In addition, the music you select can even inspire new faith or renewed faith in the lives of your family and friends. The approved selections can be found in this packet. If you are struggling with making choices, the music director can assist you. Please note that the Responsorial Psalm, Gospel Acclamation, and the Memorial Acclamation will be chosen by the music director.

### Costs

Organist: (funeral Mass) --\$225

*\* There is never a fee for the priest, although a donation to the Church is commonly offered, and is greatly appreciated.*

## Eulogy vs Words of Remembrance

Will there be a eulogy?

The Diocese of Wilmington recommends that Vigil (Wake) is the most appropriate time for members of the family and friend memories of the deceased or to pay tribute to the deceased through vocal remembrances, photographs, favorite songs, etc.

The reception after the funeral Mass is another appropriate time.

If a family member wishes to express appreciation or say something in remembrance at Mass, the following should be observed: only one family member or friend is to speak. Because of the intensity of the emotions at the time of a funeral, the person who will speak must be brief: no longer than (5) minutes (approximately one typed page). To speak in remembrance at a funeral liturgy means to offer a brief reflection on the life of the deceased in the context of his or her faith. These liturgical ‘words of remembrance’ are not the same as the secular understanding of a ‘eulogy’, which is a reminiscing and toasting of the departed. It might be helpful to reflect on the qualities of the deceased that made him or her a good person.

## **Choices for the First Reading:**

The reader for the First Reading will be: \_\_\_\_\_

### **C-3: Wisdom 3:1-6, 9**

A reading from the Book of Wisdom.

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 in the eyes of men, 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, he proved them,

and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.

Those who trust in him shall understand truth,

and the faithful shall abide with him in love:

Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones,

and his care is with his elect.

The Word of the Lord.

## **Choices for First Reading:**

The reader for the First Reading will be: \_\_\_\_\_

### **C-5: Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9**

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.  
On this mountain the LORD of hosts  
    will provide for all peoples.  
On this mountain he will destroy  
    the veil that veils all peoples,  
The web that is woven over all nations;  
    he 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 he has saved us!”

The Word of the Lord.

### **Choices for the First Reading:**

(During the Easter season, this reading will be used instead of one from the Old Testament)

The reader for the First Reading will be \_\_\_\_\_

### **C-9: Revelation 14:13**

A reading from the Book of Revelation.

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Yes,” said the Spirit, “let them find rest from their labors, for their works accompany them.”

The Word of the Lord.

## **Choices for the Second Reading:**

The reader for the Second Reading will be \_\_\_\_\_

### **E-3: Romans 6:3-4, 8-9**

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans.

Brothers and sisters,

Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus  
were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him  
through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised  
from the dead by the glory of the Father,  
we too might live in newness of life.

If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.  
We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more;  
death no longer has power over him.

The Word of the Lord.

## **Choices for the Second Reading:**

The reader for the Second Reading will be \_\_\_\_\_

### **E-12: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians  
We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters,  
about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest,  
who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose,  
so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep.  
Indeed, we tell you this on the word of the Lord,  
that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord,  
will surely not precede those who have fallen asleep.  
For the Lord himself, with a word of command,  
with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God,  
will come down from heaven,  
and the dead in Christ will rise first.  
Then we who are alive, who are left,  
will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.  
Thus we shall always be with the Lord.  
Therefore, console one another with these words.

The Word of the Lord.

## **Choices for the Second Reading:**

The reading for the Second Reading will be \_\_\_\_\_

### **E-14: 1 John 3:1-2**

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

Beloved:

See what love the Father has bestowed on us  
that we may be called the children of God.

Yet so we are.

The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Beloved, we are God's children now;  
what we shall be has not yet been revealed.

We do know that when it is revealed  
we shall be like him,  
for we shall see him as he is.

The Word of the Lord.

## **Choices for the Hymns** (All hymns can be found in the Breaking Bread hymnal)

### **Opening (Entrance) hymns:**

Alleluia! Alleluia! Let the Holy Anthem Rise  
Amazing Grace  
Be Not Afraid  
For All the Saints  
Here I am, Lord (Schutte)  
How Great Thou Art  
Lift High the Cross  
Lord You Have Come  
O God, Our Help in Ages Past  
The Strife is O'er  
You are Mine

### **Preparation of the Gifts hymn choices:**

(You may also choose a hymn from the Entrance/Closing hymn lists)

Here I Am, Lord  
I Heard the Voice of Jesus  
We Walk By Faith

### **Communion Hymns:**

Amazing Grace  
Bread for the World  
Bread of Life (Farrell)  
Eat This Bread  
Gift of Finest Wheat  
How Great Thou Art  
I Am the Bread of Life (Toolan)  
Taste and See (Moore)  
One Bread, One Body

**Communion Meditation Hymn:**  
Ave Maria (suggested choice)

**Song of Farewell**

Song of Farewell (Sands)..suggested choice  
O Loving God  
Hosea

**Closing (Recessional) Hymn**

(You may also choose a hymn from the Entrance hymn list)

For All the Saints  
Holy God, We Praise Thy Name  
Lift High the Cross  
Now Thank We All Our God  
O God, Our Help in Ages Past  
On Eagle's Wings  
The Church's One Foundation  
Irish Blessing (Fabing)

## **Funeral Mass Preparation Sheet**

Name of Deceased: \_\_\_\_\_

First \_\_\_\_\_

Last \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Funeral: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Date of Death: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Funeral Home: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*No funeral arrangements will be made at St. Luke's without the involvement of a funeral home*

**\*Please note: all visitations will be held at the funeral homes, only.**

Will there be a casket? \_\_\_\_\_

Will there be cremains? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what is the date, time and place of internment?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of person completing this form: \_\_\_\_\_

First \_\_\_\_\_

Last \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

I have readers for the Mass:  Yes       No; please provide readers

First Reading (Old Testament):  C-3: Wisdom

C-5: Isaiah

C-9: Revelation (Easter Season)

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

(Continued on next page)

Second Reading (New Testament):  E-3: Romans  
 E-12: 1 Thessalonians  
 E-14: 1 John

Reader: \_\_\_\_\_  
First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Will there be gift bearers? (bringing up the gifts)  No  
 Yes

Names of the gift bearers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Music Selections:**

Opening/Entrance Hymn: \_\_\_\_\_

Preparation of the Gifts Hymn: \_\_\_\_\_

Communion Hymn: \_\_\_\_\_

Communion Meditation: \_\_\_\_\_

Song of Farewell: \_\_\_\_\_

Closing/Recessional Hymn: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Music other than sacred music may be played prior to the beginning of Mass*

*\*Other music selections not on our approved list need the Priest's approval*

**Additional requests:**

Will there be Words of Remembrance?  No

Yes\* I have read the instructions regarding  
'Words of Remembrance' during a funeral  
Mass and will abide by them.

Will there be Military honors?  No

Yes\*, this is arranged by the funeral home; please make  
sure to let them know.

Will you need easels for large pictures:  No  
 Yes

- *Please feel free to contact our music director, Mrs. Michelee Kemp if you need any assistance with music selections: [mkempoc@earthlink.net](mailto:mkempoc@earthlink.net)*

➤ Once the Funeral Preparation Sheet is completed, please call the parish office as soon as possible to set up a meeting with our pastor, Father Jennings (410)250-0300. Make sure to bring the completed Funeral Preparation Packet with you to this meeting.