

PLANNING THE FUNERAL MASS

If you are planning to have a Funeral Mass for your loved one, please remember to include contacting the Parish in your planning to make sure a Priest will be available for the funeral.

The Funeral Mass is a beautiful occasion to bring sanctity to the burial of the Faithful. The format is, of course, the same as a Sunday, or daily Mass, with the exception of the opening and closing rites.

The Introductory Rites

The Opening Rite of the Funeral Mass includes the Placing of the Pall, which is a large white cloth, over the casket, or the urn. In Baptism we are clothed in the new life in Christ. And to symbolize this fact we are clothed with a white cloth in Baptism. So too in death, we place the white cloth, to symbolize that even in death we are clothed with Christ, and that we share a death like his.

Afterwards, a Christian Symbol is placed atop the Casket, or the Urn. This is often a crucifix, a bible, or a rosary. Family members may be chosen to do both of these tasks. However, it is important to remember that in grief many are unable to participate very actively in the Funeral Mass, aside from praying and grieving, and there is no obligation to do so. However, if family members or friends wish to take part in these actions, it often has great meaning for all involved.

If you are planning to have musicians present, please consult with them as to appropriate music for all the parts of the Mass.

The Liturgy of the Word

Here we listen to the Word of God proclaimed, the Homily is given, and we join our prayers to the Universal Church in the Prayers of the Faithful.

Many times, members or friends of the family will read some of the readings, or the Prayers of the Faithful. If choosing to do so, please choose Catholics in good standing, who attend Mass and are familiar with the ceremony.

At times, no one is able to read due to the grieving process, and this is perfectly understandable. At other times, no family members are Catholic, or have fallen away from the Church. There is no obligation to designate anyone to read the readings. Though it is always beneficial to read through the designated readings and choose appropriate readings for the Mass.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Liturgy of the Eucharist proceeds as usual at Mass. Many families will choose to have members of the family bring the gifts of bread and wine up in procession. If so, please make a note of it.

Non practicing and non Catholics should refrain from receiving the Eucharist.

Closing Rites

The Words of Remembrance are an occasion to recall the Faith of the departed. They are intended to recall the Faith, the Christian witness, of the deceased. It's wisest to strive for brevity here.

Again, many people are simply unable to speak in public at a funeral, and there is no obligation to do so.

This is a brief guide to planning the Funeral Mass. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact your Priest or the Parish Staff.