

St. Therese of Lisieux Parish



Mass of Christian Burial

Understanding Funeral Rites

The Catholic Church envisions the funeral rites as comprising three principal moments: the Vigil for the Deceased, the Funeral Liturgy, and the Rite of Committal.

The presiding minister of the Vigil service is usually a priest or a deacon; however, other pastoral staff or members of the parish can also serve as leaders.

As much as possible, the family of the deceased should participate in planning and celebrating the Vigil. While many Catholics find the rosary to be comforting at the time of death, the ritual of the Church clearly prefers a Vigil service with Scripture readings and prayers. The rosary may be said by members of the family, various fraternal or social organizations, or by a staff member at any time during the visitation period. The Vigil service is also the appropriate setting for family or friends to offer eulogies or tributes. If done during the Funeral Liturgy, they should be kept to a minimum (usually one brief eulogy of three to five minutes).

What has become a common practice at St. Therese and other Catholic churches is to have the body lie in state in the church immediately prior to the Funeral Liturgy. This practice permits family and friends to gather directly at the Church and allows for a more natural flow of events at the beginning of the funeral rites in the Church. This practice is very much encouraged whenever possible.

Funeral Liturgies are encouraged for all active and practicing Catholics. On days when Funeral Liturgies are not permitted, such as a holy day, a Funeral Liturgy outside the Mass can be chosen. Prior to the Funeral Liturgy, the family of the deceased will be asked to meet with the Priest to plan the Funeral Liturgy. Family participation is encouraged throughout the Liturgy. Following the Funeral Liturgy, the body is taken for burial. Again, the Church is present in this final act of celebrating the life of the deceased. The prayer of committal can be offered at the graveside or in a chapel.

Symbols

Symbols are an integral part of our liturgical life; through them, the Church celebrates and teaches our faith. In the celebration of Christian death, there are certain time-honored symbols the Church has chosen to represent our faith in the Resurrection. The Paschal Candle, the symbol of Christ whose Resurrection conquered the darkness of the world, should always be placed in a prominent and visible place near the body. Holy water and the white funeral pall recall the water and white robe of our baptism. Incense reminds us that our whole life as a Christian should be an offering of worship and praise rising up to God's glory out of gratitude for our life and our salvation. Music is also an important symbol; therefore only liturgically appropriate music should be used during the Funeral Liturgy. Non-liturgical sentimental musical favorites of the deceased may be played before or after the Vigil Service or at the funeral luncheon, but they should not be used during the liturgy itself.

Other secular symbols or signs (such as the American flag) should not be included in the Funeral Liturgy. In the case of a departed veteran, the flag should be removed from the casket at the door of the church and then replaced with the pall. At the conclusion of the Funeral Liturgy, after the pall has been removed and as the body leaves the Church, the flag may once again adorn the casket.

(From Blessed Are They Who Mour—A Pastoral Letter to the Faithful of the Archdiocese of Detroit)

OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

(Please choose one of the following Old Testament Readings)

1. A reading from the book of Sirach 26:1-4, 13-16

Like the sun rising is the beauty of a good wife in a well-kept house

Happy the husband of a good wife,
Twice-lengthened are his days;
A worthy wife brings joy to her husband,
Peaceful and full is his life.
A good wife is a generous gift
Bestowed upon him who fears the Lord;
Be he rich or poor, his heart is content,
And a smile is ever on his face.

A gracious wife delights her husband,
Her thoughtfulness puts flesh on his bones;
A gift from the Lord is her governed speech,
And her firm virtue is of surpassing worth.
Choicest of blessings is a modest wife,
Priceless her chaste person.
Like the sun rising in the Lord's heavens,
The beauty of a virtuous wife is the radiance of her home.

The Word of the Lord

2. A reading from the book of Job 19:1, 23-27

I know that my Redeemer lives

Job answered and said:
Oh, would that my words were written down!
Would that they were inscribed in a record:
That with an iron chisel and with lead
they were cut in the rock forever!
But as for me, I know that my Vindicator lives,
and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust;
Whom I myself shall see:
my own eyes, not another's, shall behold him,
And from my flesh I shall see God;
my inmost being is consumed with longing.

The Word of the Lord

3. A reading from the book of Wisdom 3:1-9

He accepted them as a holocaust

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 before 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.
In the time of their visitation they shall shine,
and shall dart about as sparks through stubble;
They shall judge nations and rule over peoples,
and the Lord shall be their King forever.
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

4. A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah 1 25:62, 7-9

The Lord God will destroy death for ever

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

5. A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8

There is a time for everything under heaven

There is an appointed time for everything;
and a time for every affair under the heavens.

A time to be born, and a time to die;
A time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.

A time to kill and a time to heal;
A time to tear down, and a time to build.

A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance.

A time to scatter stone, and a time to gather them,
A time to embrace and a time to be far from embraces.

A time to seek, and a time to lose;
A time to keep, and a time to cast away.

A time to rent, and a time to sew;
A time to be silent, and a time to speak.

A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time of war, and a time of peace.

The Word of the Lord

6. A reading from the second book of Maccabees 12:43-46

It is good and holy to think of the dead rising again

Judas (the ruler of Israel) then took up a collection among
all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas,
which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice.

In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way,
for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would
have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death.
But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits
those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy
and pious thought. Thus he made atonement for
the dead that they might be freed from this sin.

The Word of the Lord

8. A reading from the book of the prophet Daniel 12:1-3

Of those who lie sleeping in the dust of the earth many will awake

(I, Daniel, mourned and heard this word of the Lord)

At that time there shall arise

Michael, the great prince,
guardian of your people;

It shall be a time unsurpassed in distress
since nations began until that time.

At that time your people shall escape,
everyone who is found written in the book.

Many of those who sleep
in the dust of the earth shall awake;

Some shall live forever,
others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace.

But the wise shall shine brightly
like the splendor of the firmament,
And those who lead the many to justice
shall be like the stars forever.”

The Word of the Lord

NEW TESTAMENT READINGS

(Please choose one of the following New Testament Readings)

9. A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans 8:14-23

We groan while we wait for the redemption of our bodies

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.
For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,
but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry,
Abba, “Father!” The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit
that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God
and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may
also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing
compared with the glory to be revealed for us.

The Word of the Lord

10. A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans 6:3-4, 8-9
Let us walk in newness of life

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. For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection. We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin. For a dead person has been absolved from sin. 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

11. A reading from the Book of Revelation 21:1-5a, 6b-7
There will be no more death

I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away."

The one who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give a gift from the spring of life-giving water. The victor will inherit these gifts, and I shall be his God, and he will be my son."

The Word of the Lord

12. A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans 8:31b-25, 37-39
Who can ever come between us and the love of Christ

If God is for us, who can be against us? He did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, will he not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?

No, in all these things, we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord

13. A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians 4:13-18
We shall stay with the Lord for ever

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.

The Word of the Lord

14. A reading from the first letter of John 3:1-2
We shall see God as he really is

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

15. A reading from the first letter of John 3:14-16

We have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers and sisters

We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers. Whoever does not love remains in death.

Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him. The way we came to know love was that Jesus laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

The Word of the Lord

16. A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians 5:1, 6-10

We have an everlasting home in heaven

We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

So we are always courageous, although we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yet we are courageous, and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord. Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

The Word of the Lord

17. A reading from the book of Revelation 14:13

Happy are those who die in the Lord

I 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

18. A reading from the letter of Paul to the Philippians 3:20-21

Jesus will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours to be like his glorious body

Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified Body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.

The Word of the Lord

GOSPEL READINGS

(If you would like, you may choose one of the following Gospel readings for the Priest to proclaim)

19. A reading from the holy gospel according to John 5:24-29

Whoever hears my word and believes has passed from death to life

"Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes in the one who sent me has eternal life and will not come to condemnation, but has passed from death to life. Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming and is now here when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so also he gave to his Son the possession of life in himself. And he gave him power to exercise judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, because the hour is coming in which all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and will come out, those who have done good deeds to the resurrection of life, but those who have done wicked deeds to the resurrection of condemnation."

20. A reading from the holy gospel according to John 6:37-40

All who believe in the Son will have eternal life and I will raise them to life again on the last day

Jesus said to the crowds:

"Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me, because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day."

21. A reading from the holy gospel according to John 14:1-6

There are many rooms in my Father's house

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where I am going you know the way."

Thomas said to him, "Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?"

Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

22. A reading from the holy gospel according to John 11:21-27
I am the resurrection and the life

When Jesus arrived in Bethany he found Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God, God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world."

23. A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew 5:1-12a
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven

When he saw the crowds, Jesus went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are they who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the land.
Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the clean of heart,
for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of
righteousness,
for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and
utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me.
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven."

24. A reading from the holy gospel according to John 12:23-26
If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it yields a rich harvest

Jesus told his disciples:

"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me."

25. A reading from the holy gospel according to John 6:51-58
All who eat this bread will live for ever; and I will raise them up on the last day

Jesus said to the crowds:

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my Flesh for the life of the world."

The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his Flesh to eat?" Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink his Blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my Flesh is true food, and my Blood is true drink. Whoever eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever."

26. A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew 11:25-30
Come to me . . . and I will give you rest

On one occasion Jesus spoke thus:

"I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful)

The Priest begins: Brothers and sisters, Jesus Christ is risen from the dead and sits at the right hand of the Father, where he intercedes for his Church. Confident that God hears the voices of those who trust in the Lord Jesus, we join our prayers to His:

In baptism (name) received the light of Christ. Scatter the darkness now and lead him/her over the waters of death.

Lord, in your mercy:

R: Hear our prayer

Our brother/sister (name) was nourished at the table of the Savior. Welcome him/her into the halls of the heavenly banquet.

Lord, in your mercy:

R: Hear our prayer

Many friends and members of our families have gone before us and await the kingdom. Grant them an everlasting home with your Son.

Lord, in your mercy:

R: Hear our prayer

Many people die by violence, war, and famine each day. Show your mercy to those who suffer so unjustly these sins against your love and gather them to the eternal kingdom of peace.

Lord, in your mercy:

R: Hear our prayer

Those who trusted in the Lord now sleep in the Lord. Give refreshment, rest, and peace to all whose faith is known to you alone.

Lord, in your mercy:

R: Hear our prayer.

The family and friends of (name) seek comfort and consolation. Heal their pain and dispel the darkness and doubt that come from grief.

Lord, in your mercy:

R: Hear our prayer.

We are assembled here in faith and confidence to pray for our brother/sister (name). Strengthen our hope so that we may live in the expectation of your Son's coming.

Lord, in your mercy:

R. Hear our prayer.

Optional Donations

Payment is not expected for funeral services of parish members. If families have the means to offer a stipend and wish to do so, it is entirely appropriate and just, but at the same time, no one should feel compelled to do so. A donation (of \$200) is welcome considering the parish resources that are used for the staff, building, utilities, etc.

Priest: The clergy does not receive the church donation. If the family wishes to "gift" the priest, it is appreciated and should be made payable to the priest's name.

Music Minister: You may wish to give a "gift" to the music minister.

Non-Parishioners: For funeral services of non-parishioners a \$300 donation is requested

Funeral Luncheons

Funeral Luncheons for parishioners are available in our parish social hall when the hall is available. The luncheons are catered and served by our funeral luncheon ministry.

Cost of the luncheon varies, depending on the caterer used (generally around \$11 per person) and some caterers require a 50 person minimum. If you are interested in having your funeral luncheon in our social hall, please let the Priest or office staff know as soon as possible, so that more information can be given to you and arrangements can be made.

Bereavement Assistance

Grief after the funeral is often more painful after a loved has been buried. St. Therese of Lisieux has a grief ministry and offers bereavement sessions twice a year to help those who are having a difficult time adjusting to the loss of a loved one.

In November, a memorial liturgy is held for family and friends of those who have died, so that they can gather in solidarity and prayer.

Please ask the office staff for further information if needed.

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let
perpetual light shine upon them.*

May they rest in peace.

*May the souls of all the faithful departed, through
the mercy of God, rest in peace.*

Amen

