

Funeral Planning

"At the death of a Christian, whose life of faith was begun in the waters of Baptism and strengthened at the Eucharistic table, the Church intercedes on behalf of the deceased because of its confident belief that death is not the end, nor does it break the bonds forged in life. The Church also ministers to the sorrowing and consoles them in the funeral rites with the comforting Word of God and the Sacrament of the Eucharist."

(Order of Christian Funerals, no. 4)

As Benjamin Franklin says, death and taxes are the only things certain in life. Do you have a plan for your funeral? Have you shared this plan with your family and parish? Sadly, many do not know the beauty and richness that the Church offers at our passing. The first preface of a funeral mass says life changes it does not end with death. Respect for the living, the dying, and the dead is of utmost importance. Working with a local Funeral Home and the parish ensures that our loved ones are properly honored. Funeral homes provide an irreplaceable service and work together with the parish. The parish staff and volunteers cannot take the place of funeral home services—even for families that choose cremation. In addition to handling the remains of our loved one, the funeral home collects stipends on behalf of the parish that supports the clergy, musicians, and parish services.

Although Saint Alphonsus can accommodate a short visitation (up to 2 hours) on the day of the funeral liturgy in the reception room only, the funeral home, the day before a funeral liturgy, is the ideal location and timing for a visitation. Funeral homes provide space, staff, and refreshments that people expect and that the parish cannot provide.

The Mass of Christian Burial is a time to remember the life of the deceased and to commend our loved one to God. In prayer we ask God to console us in our grief and give us strength to support one another. The best gift we can give to a loved one, is a Mass of Christian Burial. The Church also encourages us to offer Masses for deceased loved ones and all the holy souls in Purgatory.

Preplanning your funeral is one of the best gifts you can give your family. This includes choosing a funeral home, the parish, and arrangements for the liturgies.

To preplan or plan when a death occurs, a parish funeral planner will meet with family to plan the Funeral liturgy. At the meeting, the following decisions are made:

- Readings for the liturgy
- Funeral (liturgical) music
- Full Mass plan, including the Liturgy of the Eucharist
- Timing of visitation and other details (i.e., Rosary, eulogy)
- Post funeral luncheon

Funeral Planning

A Memorial Mass follows the same format as the Mass of Christian Burial, but the body or the cremains of the deceased is not present. Some rites are omitted.

When the body or cremains are present, after the Mass of Christian burial, the Rite of Committal (interment, entombment, or burial) takes place at the cemetery chosen by the family. The presider offers the following: Invitation to prayer, Scripture, Prayer, Committal.

For more information or to preplan for yourself, contact Terri Delaney, the Associate Director of Outreach at: tdelaney@zionsvillecatholic.com or 317-873-2885 ext 411.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,

and let Your perpetual light shine upon them.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed

rest in peace. Amen.