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POLICY ON EULOGIES

In 1988 the National Liturgy Office issued a pamphlet entitled **A**Catholic Funerals and Eulogies, the Pall and the Flag[®]. In a letter dated October 13, 1998, Bishop Sherlock indicated that this leaflet had his total and unconditional support. The dilemma of eulogies at Catholic funerals continues to be an area of struggle for many of our parishes today. The following expresses the eulogy policy for the Diocese of London.

The *Order of Christian Funerals* is quite clear that there is no place for the eulogy in the funeral rite. However, the homily is an excellent opportunity to speak about how the deceased person faithfully lived his or her life.

A brief homily based on the readings should always be given at the funeral liturgy, but never any kind of eulogy. The homilist should dwell on God's compassionate love and on the paschal mystery of the Lord as proclaimed in the Scripture readings. Through the homily, the community should receive the consolation and strength to face the death of one of its members with a hope that has been nourished by the proclamation of the saving word of God (*Order of Christian Funerals*, no. 308).

As such, it is inappropriate for a member or friend of the family to express words of remembrance as part of the homily or as an extension of the homily.

The practice of having a family member speak in memory of the deceased following communion interrupts the flow of the liturgy and seriously impairs the power of the liturgy to affirm the faithful's hope and trust in the Paschal Mystery. Such practice is therefore strictly forbidden.

This is not to say that there is no opportunity for the family and friends to speak in memory of the deceased. In each Vigil For the Deceased contained in the *Order of Christian Funerals* an opportunity for a member or a friend of the family to speak in remembrance of the deceased is offered. This is the most appropriate **C** and only time **C** in the structure and rhythm of the funeral rites for a member or friend of the family to speak in memory of the deceased.

If there is no Vigil For the Deceased, it may be appropriate to have words remembering the deceased prior to the Funeral Mass. In such instance, a single member or friend of the family may offer these words, with the approval of the pastor (or the presbyter presiding at the Funeral Mass). The words offered are to be prepared beforehand and to be of such length as not to affect the scheduled beginning of the Funeral Mass.

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