



ST. PHILIP

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

PLANNING A CATHOLIC FUNERAL

THE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS:

A guide for the Liturgical Rites of the Roman Catholic Church
at the time of death of a loved one.



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FUNERALS IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic Funeral Rites in the Order of Christian Funerals (1989) are celebrations that enable the Christian community to mourn as well as to hope by focusing on the mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ. The Funeral Mass is ordinarily the central element of Catholic funerals.

The Funeral Mass is a prayer for God's mercy for the deceased and a solace for the living, including the entire faith community. The Church encourages the burial of Catholics in Catholic cemeteries (Canon 1180.1). Burial in the consecrated ground of a Catholic cemetery is a sign of baptismal commitment and gives witness, even in death, to faith in Christ's resurrection.



THE VIGIL

The Vigil is often the first time family, friends and members of the parish community gather in remembrance of the deceased, for prayer and support. The Vigil may be celebrated in the home of the deceased, in the funeral home, or in the church.

During the wake, the Vigil for the Deceased is the principal rite celebrated by the Church in the time following death and before the Funeral Liturgy.

The practice of scheduling a specific hour for the Vigil for the Deceased is encouraged in order for more of the faithful to participate in this liturgy. Devotions such as the rosary are permitted at other times during the wake.

The Vigil for the Deceased may provide a chance to take part in the funeral rites for those unable to participate in the Funeral Mass or Rite of Committal.

Since eulogies are not permitted during the funeral Mass, the Vigil is the appropriate time for remembrances. After the Prayer of Intercession or at some other suitable time during the Vigil, it is appropriate for a family member or a friend to speak in remembrance of the deceased should they wish to (Order of Christian Funerals #62).



THE FUNERAL RITES

The Funeral Mass may be celebrated between 10a - 2p Monday – Friday. Saturday funerals are scheduled in consultation with the parish office and clergy. There are no funerals permitted on Sundays and Church holy days.

The Eucharist is the heart of the Paschal reality of Christian death (Catechism of the Catholic Church #1689). In the celebration of the Eucharist, the Church most perfectly expresses her communion with those who have died. The celebration of the Eucharist at the funeral is an opportunity for the community of the faithful, and for the family, to “learn to live in communion with the one who has ‘fallen asleep in the Lord,’ by communicating the Body of Christ of which he is a living member and, then, by praying for him and with him” (CCC #1689)



THE FUNERAL LITURGY OUTSIDE THE MASS

The Funeral Liturgy outside Mass (OCF #177-203) is celebrated when a Mass is not possible or not deemed appropriate. It is ordinarily celebrated in the parish church, but it may also be celebrated in the funeral home, the home of the deceased or cemetery chapel (OCF #179).

* Please seek pastoral advice of the parish priest or deacon in determining what is appropriate.

Music is an essential element of this form of celebration, which includes the entrance or gathering song, the responsorial psalm, the gospel acclamation, and especially the song of farewell at the final commendation.



THE RITE OF COMMITTAL

The Rite of Committal is celebrated at the place of burial or interment and never in the church. The Rite of Committal, whether at an interment chapel, at a mausoleum or at a grave side, is a gathering of the faithful for prayer.

Military services and certain cultural or social rites are permissible and appropriate at the cemetery. These other services should be arranged in advance with the parish priest or deacon and coordinated in such a way that they do not disrupt or distract from the integrity of the liturgical committal service. Funeral directors are called upon to assist in the coordination of these elements, and to safeguard the integrity of the Church's liturgy at the Rite of Committal.

If a lengthy time has passed since the celebration of the Funeral Liturgy, or if the funeral has been conducted overseas or in a distant state, the Rite of Committal with Final Commendation (OCF #224-233) may be more appropriate.



MUSIC

The parish will provide liturgical music at all Funeral Masses. Music selected for the Order of Christian Funerals should be appropriate for Christian prayer and conform to liturgical directives. The texts of the music should express the paschal mystery of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. This is especially important for the Song of Farewell.

*Popular non-religious songs are not to be used in the liturgy. The same liturgical norms applied to music at any Mass apply to the Funeral Mass.

There are three standards of judgment proposed in Music in Catholic Worship. The liturgical judgment: is the music's text, form, placement and style congruent with the nature of the liturgy? (MCW 30-38) The musical judgment: is the music technically, aesthetically and expressively good irrespective of musical idiom or style? (MCW 26-29) The pastoral judgment: will it help this assembly to pray? (MCW 39-41)

Certain musical texts are primary and are sung at the Funeral Mass: the responsorial psalm, the gospel acclamation, the three acclamations of the Eucharistic Prayer, the "Lamb of God" litany, and the "Song of Farewell." These are not to be sung by cantor, choir, or soloist alone. Rather, they belong to the assembly.

Music is preeminent among the signs expressed by the participants in any liturgy. Therefore, recorded music is not to be used within the liturgy to replace the congregation, the choir, the organist, cantor, or other musicians. (Liturgical Music Today, #60).



EULOGIES

The Vigil for the Deceased is a more fitting time for individuals to share remembrances of the deceased.

Only a priest or deacon may preach the homily at the funeral liturgy. A eulogy is not appropriate where a homily is prescribed (OCF, #27), although examples from the person's life may be used in the homily. The literary genre of eulogy is not a homiletic form and therefore generally does not have place in the celebration of the Mass. The homily is to "illumine the mystery of Christian death in the light of the risen Christ." (CCC, #1688) as proclaimed in the readings.



CREMATION

While the Church recommends that the pious custom of burying the bodies of the dead be observed, cremation is permitted as long as it has not been chosen for reasons contrary to Catholic teaching (Canon 1176.3, CCC, #2301).

Cremated remains should be treated with the same respect given to the remains of a human body, and should be entombed or buried, whether in the ground or at sea. The scattering of cremated remains on the ground or on the sea or keeping any portion of them for personal reasons is not the reverent final disposition that the Church directs. It should be noted that burial at sea of cremated remains differs from scattering. An appropriate and worthy container, heavy enough to be sent to its final resting place, may be dropped into the sea.



SCRIPTURE & MUSIC SELECTIONS

*Please visit our website for a full printable list of Scripture verses and music selections with Psalm song sheets:
www.stphilipchurch-bc.org.



PAPERWORK

Please complete the following form on page 9 with the relevant information needed for the planned funeral. Please return the completed form to the St. Philip Parish office prior to the first consultation or to the Parish Priest at the first consultation.



MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS & FEES

Memorial Contributions and offerings are accepted by the parish on the occasion of a funeral. The offering on the occasion of a funeral does not include the professional fees for an Organist (\$175), Cantor (\$150), and other support services, are usually handled through the funeral home.

*If you are unable to cover these costs please ask about our plan for assisting families with financial hardship. No offering is expected from the poor or those unable to afford an offering.

St. Philip is grateful for your remembrance of us in your designated contributions.

Thank you.



FUNERAL PLANNING FORM: GENERAL INFORMATION

BASIC INFORMATION

Name of the Deceased to be used:

Funeral Date/Time:

Vigil Date/Time:

Contact Person:

Contact Relationship:

Contact Phone(s):

Funeral Director:

FOR ALL FUNERALS

First Reading:

Reader:

Responsorial Psalm:

Reader (if not sung):

Second Reading:

Reader:

Gospel Reading:

Hymns

Opening Hymn:

Closing Hymn:

FUNERAL MASSES ONLY

Offertory Hymn:

Communion Hymn:

Gift bearer(s)? no ____ / yes ____ Name(s):

NOTES



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DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

THE CATHOLIC FUNERAL IS
A “BRIDGE” BETWEEN
DEATH & “NEW LIFE”.