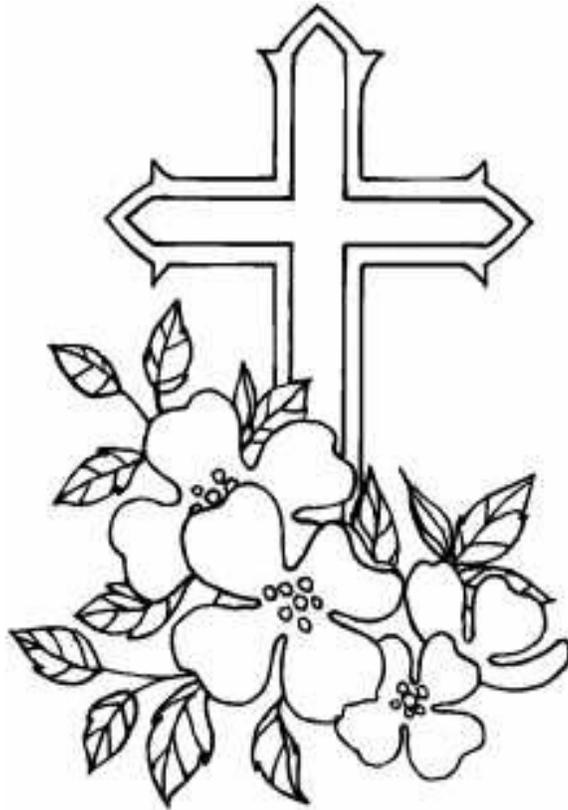


Guidelines for



Funeral Planning

*St. Therese Catholic Church
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Introduction

At the time of a death please contact the Funeral home so they can assist you with the necessary arrangements for a funeral. Generally, the funeral home will call the Church office to set up the day and time for the funeral. We will do our best to accommodate your wishes.

We ask you to come to the Church office to discuss the readings and music you would like to use for the funeral. You are also able to decide on which venue you would like for the Funeral Mass—the St. Ignatius Day Chapel or the Church. You may also prearrange some details of the funeral to relieve some of the stress.

If you have questions that you would like to discuss, please call the office and ask for Rosemary Hyman, the Liturgy Coordinator. She will be happy to discuss any prearrangements or questions you may have about a Catholic funeral.

The Vigil or Wake

The Vigil can be celebrated at the Funeral home or at the Church. A priest, deacon or lay person, depending on availability, can conduct a short prayer service or lead the rosary during this time. It is also a good time for Eulogies to the deceased.

The Funeral Mass

At St. Therese we have a Bereavement Team. The team has been where you are. They have lost a loved one and want your experience during this difficult time to be as prayer-filled and community based as possible. They are here to support you and your family and to assist the

priest with the details of the Mass.

We ask that you have the funeral home staff at the funeral Mass, whether there is a casket or an urn. Funeral directors are there to handle things that are NOT the duty of the Bereavement team. Funeral directors try to foresee any issues you might have – Kleenex, water, restrooms, but also are there for the real things that need to be done such as lead the family into the Church, place or remove the pall, carry the Urn in and out, help family to seats, bring the casket out of the Church, lead the family out, distribute the programs, remove and retain the cards from the flowers so that you don't miss a "Thank You," to supply and direct people to the registry for signing, arrange the flowers and photos, assist the family in any way possible and answer any questions you might have.

Follow the guidance of the Funeral Home as to how early to arrive at the Church. We suggest at least 15 to 30 minutes before the scheduled funeral Mass. Please have the reader for the funeral, go to the Ambo and acquaint themselves with the Ambo, microphone and binder on it. The Ambo is the wooden Lectern to the right of the Altar.

About 15 minutes before the scheduled funeral Mass the funeral home brings the casket or Urn into the Narthex. It is not necessary to have Pallbearers for this task or you can use family and friends as pallbearers. The

funeral home is able to transfer the body into the Church without Pallbearers but they are a good way to involve more friends and family in the funeral itself.

The Narthex is generally arranged with the casket or urn, a table with the programs, a stand with a registration book, flowers and photos.

The Church provides a program with an order of worship and a list of names of all those who participate in the Mass (readers, Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, Altar Servers, etc.). We can put a photo of the deceased on the front or an appropriate piece of clipart. If you would like a poem or prayer, or something of that nature on the back, we are happy to oblige. We try to include the obituary when available.

You and your family have the choice of the Day Chapel (holds 275) or the Church (holds 1200) unless there is a previously scheduled event in that venue.

Our Music Director and the Celebration choir will be present to add their talented voices to the memory of this day. Along with the Bereavement Team they serve to help the family through this difficult time and express their sympathy through their voices.

The casket is placed in front of the doors into the nave. The Urn is placed on a table at the entrance into the nave. It is acceptable to put a photo of the deceased and/or a small vase of flowers on the urn table. It is also acceptable to have a poster or framed canvas in

the Narthex with a selection of family photos. The funeral home can provide a stand on which to put the photo board.

A selection of flowers can also be arranged in the Narthex as long as it doesn't impede the flow of foot traffic. Flowers are also acceptable near the front of the Church. The flowers should never block the access to the Altar or the view of mourners at the Mass.

The Bereavement Team will assist the funeral home in finding the right place to put the flowers.

The funeral directors will remove flowers from the casket, or the flag on the casket of a veteran as soon as they enter the Narthex.

THE FUNERAL MASS BEGINS

The Funeral Mass begins in the Narthex.

The celebrant begins the Mass in the Narthex with the Greeting. "In the name of the Father," The Urn or the Casket is sprinkled with holy water in the Narthex. The Casket is then covered with the pall – the white garment - the sign of Baptism.

The Pall can be placed by family members, the Bereavement Team, or the Funeral home. Christian symbols – Crucifix, Bible, rosaries, etc. can be placed by the family, or bereavement team, or funeral home.

As soon as the Urn is sprinkled with holy water the family member, friend or funeral director may carry the Urn to the table at the bottom of the Altar steps.

The procession into Church ...

- Altar Server carrying processional cross, if present
- Celebrant / Deacon
- Casket taken down the aisle in procession by the Funeral Directors OR
- The Urn is carried to the table at the bottom of the Altar steps by a family member or a funeral director.
- A Funeral Director leads the family into the Nave to their seats. Right front.

At the bottom of the Altar steps you will see...

The Paschal candle – It is a symbol of Baptism and is used at a funeral Mass. It is placed at the foot of the Altar steps. If there is a casket the casket is placed perpendicular to the Altar steps.

If there is an Urn, a table is placed in front of the Paschal candle. You may have a small arrangement of flowers (a bud vase is nice) on this table and another photo (8 x 10). They may not block the view of the altar.

Please remain standing at your pew while we finish the Opening hymn and until the celebrant reads the opening prayer. When we all say AMEN, be seated.

It is now time for the 1st reader to go to the Ambo and bow to the Altar. The Ambo is the stand to the **right** of the Altar. The first reader should adjust the microphone as needed and take their time to read the words of scripture. Begin by saying “A reading from the Book

of Wisdom” or what is printed on the top of the page. Do not give the Chapter and verse. When you finish the reading pause and then say “The Word of the Lord” The congregation will respond.

The choir will now sing the Gospel response, The celebrant or a deacon will read the Gospel. The celebrant will do the homily. Now the person you have designated to read the Prayers of the Faithful will go to the Ambo. The priest will begin the prayer and then the reader will do his part with the congregation responding.

At the end the priest will again say a short prayer and the reader will go down the steps, bow to the altar and return to their seat.

It is now time for the Presentation of the Gifts. Whoever you have designated to bring up the gifts should go to the back of the church and an Usher will give them the ciborium with the hosts in it and the cruet with the wine in it and a cruet with water in it if needed. The Usher will tell them when to start up the aisle. They will give the ciborium and the cruet to the priest, bow and return to their seats.

The Mass now continues as normal. At the Lamb of God the people you have designated or the Church has asked to be Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will go to the foot of the Altar and stand until it is time for them to go up the steps.

After communion the celebrant will say the Prayer after Communion and if there is a Communion meditation hymn it is sung at this time.

If there is a Eulogy now is the time for it. We ask that you remember that you are in Sacred Space and keep your comments appropriate. We also ask that you speak **5 minutes ONLY**. If you wish to share more remembrances, please do so during the Visitation at the funeral home or at a luncheon later.

The celebrant will now incense the urn or casket as the choir sings the song of Farewell. And then the final blessing.

The Casket is then turned and taken back down the center aisle. During the recessional hymn the procession leaves the Church with the celebrant first, followed by the casket or urn, followed by the family.

In the Narthex the funeral home directors will remove the pall from the casket, fold it and place it to the side. They will then put the flag or flowers back on the casket before it is taken to the hearse.

A funeral luncheon is provided by the SWAT team (Special Works and Tasks) for funerals, if possible. Sometimes, because of having an extremely busy parish it is impossible for us to have the available space needed for the luncheon. We are sorry for any inconvenience that this may cause.

This is a difficult time. Don't stress out over standing or sitting at the right time during the Mass. It is **NOT** important.

Please remember that this funeral for your loved one is

really the beginning of your healing. The grief will take as long as it takes. There is no set time for grief so don't let others tell you to move on with your life or "get over it."

Several times a year we have a Bereavement group that meets one day a week (1 ½ hours) for 6 weeks. You need to give yourself 6 months of grieving before you take this on. If you need someone to talk to during this time feel free to call the office and set up an appointment.

NOTES

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