

During a Catholic funeral or memorial Mass, families may designate one person to share a few memories of the deceased. **The Words of Remembrance**, an optional part of the liturgy, are distinct from a eulogy, which might be shared at another time (e.g., during the wake service at the funeral home or at a funeral luncheon). *While you may want to tell the whole story of your loved-one's life (as you might do in the obituary or eulogy), the funeral liturgy isn't the right time to do this.*

Ideally, the Words of Remembrance are a brief reflection on the life of the deceased which focuses on the **Christian values and actions of the individual**. We encourage families to highlight the qualities they most valued in their loved one and the difference the deceased made in the lives of others. Many years of experience among our priests and pastoral staff suggest the following:

The Words of Remembrance should ...

- Be given by one person
- Include one or two vignettes that typify the deceased's **character as a follower of Jesus Christ**. The speaker might focus on the individual's capacity for love, faith in God, support of family and friends, generosity, determination, etc.
- Be planned carefully, written out, timed, and shared out loud with at least one friend or family member before the liturgy. Sometimes just saying things out loud gives one ideas for better phrasing or word choice.
- Last no longer than three minutes. Brevity is important. Lengthy "eulogies" may dull the very message one wants to convey about the deceased, while sharing a few brief stories with the gathered assembly can be a powerful reminder to everyone of *who the deceased was to each of them individually*,

If you have any questions about the Words of Remembrance, email JaneAnne Campbell at ja.campbell@ascensionoakpark.com.