

A GUIDE FOR PREPARING THE FUNERAL LITURGY

LOCKLEYS CATHOLIC PARISH

The time of death of someone who is close to us is a moment of sadness, tears and grief. It is also a time of faith, a moment to draw close to God through the Catholic community and the Catholic parish of Lockleys to accompany, support and pray with you.

We take to heart these words from the *Order of Christian Funerals*:

"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*, no 4)

There are *three parts* to the Catholic funeral rites:

1. A *vigil service* with either the body or cremated remains present. If the body is present, the casket may be either open or closed. It is a moment when family and friends gather around the body, with prayer and [readings from Scripture](#). This is also a time when those who knew the deceased may offer their own thoughts and the person and their life. This is the most suitable occasion for eulogies.

Elements of the vigil service and what might be helpful to think about for the vigil may be accessed [here](#). A member of the parish ministry team would be able to assist you with this.

2. A *funeral Mass or Service* with either the body or cremated remains present. If the body is not present, the service is referred to as a *Memorial Mass*.

For the *Funeral Mass*, [readings from Scripture](#), [Prayers of the Faithful](#), music, and a homily seek to express faith in the presence of God in the midst of death and the firm conviction that life does not end in death. If a eulogy is offered it will be after the final prayer after Communion, and brief (try to aim for 7-8 mins).

Preparing for the Funeral: You will find Scripture readings suitable for the Vigil and Funeral Mass [here](#), and an example of Prayers of the Faithful are found below.

Finally, you might appreciate [a template](#) of the Funeral Booklet, which might help if you are planning to produce one for those who attend to the Mass.

With all these aspects involved in preparing for the Funeral Liturgy, a member of the parish ministry team would be able to assist you with this.

3. A *graveside committal service* with burial of the body or cremated remains or the placing of the remains in a columbarium or mausoleum. The ceremony is usually shorter than the above, with a variety of selections for prayers available from the [ritual](#). Again, if you wish to be involved in selecting the prayers and readings, a member of the ministry team would be able to assist you.

Helpful is [this overview](#) of the purpose of each part of the Catholic funeral rites.

A Meditation on Those who have Died

“When we have genuinely loved someone we donate a part of ourselves to that other in a way that is beyond recall. And when they go from us they take that part of us with them. When they go from us in the permanence of death, they take that part of us permanently. Where have they gone? They have gone to be with God, the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, not the God of the dead but of the living.

So the calm we eventually experience, when our necessary period of mourning is done, is not a sign that things are again as they were before, that cannot be. It is rather a sign that part of us lives now, already in eternity, with our loved living dead.”

Karl Rahner SJ, (1904-1984, German Priest and Theologian)
Encounters with Silence

PETITIONS FOR THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Below are options for the Prayers of the Faithful petitions.

You may write your own or use or adapt the following:

1. Let us pray for **N**. In baptism he/she died with Christ, may he/she now share in the fullness of his resurrection. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

2. God is full of mercy and compassion. May he forgive **N**. any sins he/she committed through human frailty and surround him/her with love and forgiveness. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

3. For the sorrowing family, relatives and friends of **N**.; that they may find strength and consolation in their Christian faith and in the love and support of the Lockleys Catholic community. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

4. We pray for those who mourn **N**'s death (especially ___); that they may find strength and consolation in the hope that we have through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

5. God of all consolation, help us to comfort one another in our grief. We pray for all those we have loved who have died. Loving God, give them the reward of their goodness. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

6. We pray for those who care for the sick and dying, especially those who cared for **N**. during his/her illness. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

7. For all parents who grieve over the death of their children; that they may be comforted in the knowledge that they rest in God. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

8. We pray for those here today, that the memory of N., whom they loved, may inspire them with a renewed love for all of our sisters and brothers. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

9. We pray for all of us here today and for all members of our Church; that we may be prepared for the hour of our own death, when God will call us by name, to pass from this world to the next. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

10. That the Church and the parishioners of Lockleys may be a comforting witness to Christ, our resurrection and our life. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

11. That those who are burdened by their loss may be blessed with courage, strength, and patience. Lord, hear us.

Response: Lord hear our Prayer

Adapted by Lockleys Catholic Parish
From <https://www.svfparish.org/funeral-prayer-of-the-faithful>

© 2021