

# Funeral Policies

*"Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them."*

The death of a loved one can be a trying and stressful time. At the time of loss it may be difficult to focus on planning the funeral for your departed loved one. However, the funeral can be a wonderful tribute to him or her, and it can be part of our memories which last forever. The funeral can also offer great comfort and solace to those who mourn.

## Funeral Process

### The Process

The Order of Christian Funerals is a three-part ritual, with **Vigil (viewing)**, **Funeral Mass and Rite of Committal (internment)**. It is strongly encouraged that the Funeral Rites and viewing and visitation be conducted in the presence of the body of the deceased. This practice is most in accord with the sacred principles and rituals of the Christian Faith. However, the Mass of Christian Burial may also be celebrated with the cremains present in the church. Care should be taken that the cremated remains of the deceased are accorded proper respect through interment in blessed cemetery ground, or in a mausoleum. Any scattering of the cremains is not permitted, because of the reverence due the bodies and remains of the bodies of those who have been baptized and have been temples of the Holy Spirit.

# The Viewing/Vigil for the Deceased (optional not required) There is no obligation to have a viewing/vigil for the Deceased

The Viewing/Vigil is usually celebrated at the mortuary. The coordinator can arrange for a member of clergy to be present and assist with a rosary or scripture service. The mortuary will be able to assist you with any special musical selections or photographic DVD memorials that you wish to play at the vigil. The vigil service is the most appropriate time for a eulogy or reflection, sharing of stories, etc., as opposed to during the Funeral Mass. The clergy member will facilitate this at the family's request.

If for some reason the Viewing/Vigil is not celebrated at the mortuary, a viewing in the Church may be permitted one hour before the funeral Mass depending on availability. Viewings in the Church the night before are only permitted by exception and in rare circumstances since the mortuary is better equipped to handle this.

## The Funeral Mass

The mass is traditionally celebrated in the morning. Here at St. James we schedule at 10:00am or 11:00am. The parish church is the proper place for the Mass of Christian Burial. For the Funeral Mass, Christian symbols (cross, bible, scapular, etc.) may be placed on the casket at the beginning of the Funeral Mass. All secular items, like flags or medals of Honor are important, but not part of the Funeral Mass. These secular and important symbols are removed at the church door and a pall placed over the casket. This symbolizes our unity in Christ through our baptism. Christian symbols are only used within a church. Flowers may be placed in the church. Photos and other items are normally displayed in the Hall with the Book of Remembrance. The Ossuary can be placed in the front of the altar for the cremains. Some families choose to have a picture and or flowers on a small side table with the urn.

## The Rite of Committal

The Rite of Committal (internment or inurnment) is celebrated at the cemetery, ending the three-part liturgy. If local, the deacon can accompany you to the cemetery for the Committal Service.

# Funeral Scheduling

**The first step** is to contact the funeral home of your choice to handle the necessary arrangements.

**The funeral home** will contact St. James Funeral Coordinator and schedule a time for the Mass or Service. As a general rule, the funeral mass for a Catholic is celebrated in his or her own parish church.

**Once the date and time have been determined**, the coordinator will contact you and schedule an appointment to meet. Prior to the meeting,

**At the meeting**, the coordinator will help you navigate the planning process - the readings and music (Music Director will be present), as well as answer any questions you may have about the funeral service.

## Order of the Funeral Mass

The following is the Order for Christian Funeral Mass so that you may plan your liturgy (Funeral Mass) and choose the scripture readings and songs.

### Introductory Rites

(\*Done only when the body is present for the Funeral Mass)

- Greeting
- Sprinkling with Holy Water
- Placing of the Pall ( done by the family members or friends)
- Placing of Christian symbols ( done by family members or friends)
- Opening Song
- Opening Prayer

# Liturgy of the Word

- First Reading (you may choose from Old Testament or New Testament if you only have one reading. During the Easter Season, you may have two New Testament readings.)
- Psalm (sung by the Music Minister - you may choose from the psalm list)
- Second Reading (optional to have a 2nd reading; from the New Testament - you may choose from the Scripture list)
- Gospel (you may choose from the Scripture list, but will be read by the priest or deacon)
- Homily
- Intercessions

# Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Preparation of the Gifts (choose family members or friends to bring up the gifts)
- Continuation of the Mass as usual
- Communion Song

As mentioned earlier, the appropriate place for family and friends sharing, or the offering of a eulogy or reflection, is at the Mercy Meal/Reception following the Mass Service. If it is determined that a speaker is to be included at the Funeral Mass this will take place following Communion. One person may speak who will limit the comments to three to four minutes. It is requested that the person write out their comments for review and so that it be appropriate for Mass.

# Final Commendation

- Invitation to Prayer
- Silence
- Song of Farewell
- Prayer of Commendation
- Song
- Procession to the Place of Committal (to the cemetery)

# Scripture Selections

You may have one or two members of your family or friends do the readings. It is suggested that they be at least 13 years of age. The priest or deacon will read the Gospel.

# Funeral Fees

The Diocese of Atlanta has set forth certain suggested honorariums and fees for services. Normally, the mortuary will incorporate these into their contract. If you have any questions about as to whether or not these fees have been included, please contact the mortuary or ask the Funeral Coordinator for clarification. A family may request a waiver of the fees for the Church and Musicians in the event of financial hardship. Please inquire at the Parish for more information.

## Fees

<b>Service</b>	<b>Fee</b>
Church	\$100.00
Altar Servers	\$20.00
Musicians	\$100
Stipend for Priest	normally \$150.00 or whatever the family decides
Stipend for Deacon	normally \$75.00 or whatever the family decides