

Celebrating the Funeral Liturgy



Diocese of Kerry

Funeral Liturgy

Reception of the Body at the Church

Family members/friends place the pall, the Book of the Gospels or a Bible, and the cross on the coffin.

1. _____ 2. _____

Funeral Mass

Personal Mementoes (Optional)

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

Readings

1. _____ 2. _____

Prayer of the Faithful

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Presentation of the Gifts

1. _____ 2. _____

Removal of Pall

1. _____ 2. _____

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Celebrating the Funeral Liturgy

Comfort your family in their loss and sorrow.

Be our refuge and our strength, O Lord.

Prayer for Mourners

This is a sad time for you and your family. It is hard to lose someone we love. The people of this parish community wish to support and console you in your loss. As you grieve and cope with your loss, we wish to assure you of our prayerful support during this time.

The ministry of the priest at the time of a funeral is one aspect of our parish community's support for you. He is there to spend time with you and your family; to support you and also to assist you in preparing for the funeral; in leading times of prayer; and in presiding at the funeral Mass.

You will mourn and remember your loved one in different ways – you will have your own quiet private moments, but there will also be more public times for you, as you accompany the body of your loved one from their place of death to their final place of rest.

* * *

At the Reception of the Body at the Church, usually on the evening before the funeral Mass, you will encounter some of the symbols of our faith, which remind us of what we believe about life and death.

As family members or friends of the deceased, you may be invited to place the pall over the coffin. If a flag or other insignia had been draped over the coffin, it has already been removed as the coffin is brought into the church. The **pall** is a large, white cloth that covers the coffin completely. It is simple in design and unadorned, and recalls the white baptismal garment. It reminds us that we are all equal in the sight of God.

A **cross** is placed on the coffin. In baptism we were traced with the sign of the cross; during life we signed ourselves with the sign of the cross; and now in death we share in Christ's victory over death. The **Book of the Gospels** or a **Bible** may be placed on the coffin as a sign that Christians live by the word of God. Again this symbol may be placed on the coffin by family members and friends, or by other members of the community.

The **Paschal Candle** will be placed near the coffin during the funeral liturgies. It is symbolic of 'Christ our Light' present among us, and his victory over death.

* * *

At the Funeral Mass, we gather as a community to pray for the one who has died, to comfort and console those who are bereaved, and to proclaim our hope and our belief in Christ's victory over death.

The **Word of God** offers us life and hope, and in this booklet you will find a selection of the Sacred Scripture provided for funerals. This is to give you and us, the family and the community, an opportunity to hear God speak to our needs, sorrows, fears and hopes, as we mourn your loved one.

In the **Prayer of the Faithful**, we, the Christian community, call upon God to comfort the bereaved and to show mercy to the deceased. A selection of prayers is presented in this booklet. You might wish to adapt these prayers and this can be discussed with your priest as you prepare for the funeral Mass.

At the beginning of the **Liturgy of the Eucharist**, the gifts of bread and wine are offered. They are transformed to become the body and blood of Jesus Christ. These gifts may be brought to the altar by family members or by members of the wider community.

For the Final Commendation at the end of the funeral Mass, the book of the Gospels or Bible, the cross and the pall are removed from the coffin. Again members of your family or friends may wish to do this, or members of the parish community will be glad to assist.

Incense is used during the funeral rite to honour the body of the deceased, because in baptism, this person's body became a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Holy Water will have been used at different moments of the funeral rites. Now, during the Final Commendation and at the burial, the coffin is sprinkled with Holy Water, calling to mind the link between our baptism and our death.

* * *

Some families wish to include appropriate personal mementoes, representing different aspects of the person's life, and these are brought to the sanctuary at the beginning of the Mass.

Each funeral Mass celebrates the life of a person, with his or her own story and qualities. These sentiments are best included in the homily by the celebrant. Occasionally a family member may wish to say a few appropriate words either in the funeral home, or at the beginning or end of the funeral Mass, or at the graveside. These options can be discussed with your priest in preparing for the funeral.

Music and song have the power to console us, and to draw us together as a community. As important elements of the liturgy, they express our faith. In preparing for a funeral liturgy, there is a need to plan these elements with the assistance of the music personnel and the priest of the parish.

* * *

The Rite of Committal is the final farewell as we entrust your deceased to the tender and merciful embrace of God. Celebrated at the grave, this is the conclusion of the funeral rite. If the body of your deceased loved one is to be cremated, the rite of committal takes place at the burial of ashes.

As a Christian community, and as your local parish, we reach out to support and pray with you in your pain of letting go. While members of your family or friends may wish to participate in the liturgy, you need not feel any pressure to undertake any tasks. As a community, we would like to care for you at this time, and so there are Ministers of the Word, Eucharistic Ministers and other ministers available to you. We join with you in entrusting your loved one to God, our Creator and our Saviour.

***In you, we place our trust and hope,
In you, the dead find everlasting peace.***

Prayer for the Dead



First Reading

1.

A reading from the book of Wisdom 3:1-6, 9

2.

A reading from the book of Sirach 6:14-17

3.

A reading from the book of Job 19:1, 23-27

4.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 49:8-9a, 14-16

5.

A reading from the book of Lamentations 3:17-26

6.

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, 11

7.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 25:6-9

Responsorial Psalm

Ps. 22

R/ *The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.*

Ps. 24

R/ *To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.*

Ps. 26

R/ *The Lord is my light and my help.*

Ps. 62

R/ *For you my soul is thirsting, O Lord, my God.*

Ps. 114

R/ *I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.*

Second Reading

1.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles 10:34-36, 42-43

2.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians 3:20-21

3.

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians 4:13-18

4.

A reading from the first letter of St. John 3:1-2

5.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans 8:31-35, 37-39

6.

A reading from the book of Revelation 14:13

7.

A reading from the first letter of St. John 4:7-12, 16

8.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans 14:7-12

9.

A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to Timothy 2:8-13

Prayer of the Faithful 1

Priest: God, the almighty Father,
raised Christ his Son from the dead;
with confidence we ask him
to save all his people, living and dead:

1. For all those assembled here to worship in faith, that we may be gathered together again in God's kingdom. *Lord, hear us.*
2. For _____ who received the body of Christ, the bread of life, that she/he may be raised up on the last day. *Lord, hear us.*
3. For the family and friends of _____ that they may be consoled in their grief by the Lord who wept at the death of his friend Lazarus. *Lord, hear us.*
4. For all who care for the sick, that the Lord may reward them for their dedication and kindness. *Lord, hear us.*
5. For those who bear the cross of pain in mind or body. May they never feel forsaken by God. *Lord, hear us.*
6. For all those who have died. May God give them a place in the kingdom of heaven. *Lord, hear us.*

Priest: God of loving kindness,
listen favourably to our prayers:
strengthen our belief that your Son has risen from the dead
and our hope that your servants will also rise again.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Prayer of the Faithful 2

Priest: Jesus is the Son of God and the pattern for our own creation.
His promise is that one day we shall truly be like him.
With our hope founded on that promise, we pray:

1. That all of us assembled here to worship in faith, that we may be gathered together again in God's kingdom. *Lord, hear us.*
2. That God will receive our praise and thanksgiving for the life of _____ . *Lord, hear us.*
3. That God will bring to completion our baptism into Christ. *Lord, hear us.*
4. That all of us may be comforted in our grief. *Lord, hear us.*
5. That God will grant release to those who suffer in mind or body. *Lord, hear us.*
6. That God will grant peace to all who have died in the faith of Christ. *Lord, hear us.*

Priest: Lord God, comfort us, your sorrowing servants,
who seek to do your will and to know your saving peace.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Prayer of the Faithful 3

Priest: God, the almighty Father, raised Christ his Son from the dead;
with confidence
we ask him to save all his people, living and dead:

1. For all of us assembled here to worship in faith, that we may be gathered together again in God's kingdom. *Lord, hear us.*
2. For all who received the light of Christ in baptism. Scatter the darkness now and lead him/her over the waters of death.
Lord, hear us.
3. For the family and friends of _____ who seek comfort and consolation. Heal their pain and dispel the darkness and doubt that come from grief. *Lord, hear us.*
4. For those for whom we have been asked to pray, that the Lord may give them his joyful peace. *Lord, hear us.*
5. For our deceased relatives and friends and for all who have helped us, that they may have the reward of their goodness.
Lord, hear us.

Priest: Father, your Son alone has the words of eternal life.
He came that we might have life and have it to the full.
Help us to listen to his voice, and to act on his words,
so that we may come to the glory of your kingdom,
where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever.

All: Amen

Prayer of the Faithful 4

Priest: Surrounded by the sorrow of death, let us turn to Christ,
who alone has the words of eternal life:

1. For all of us assembled here to worship in faith, that we may be gathered together again in God's kingdom. *Lord, hear us.*
2. For _____ who has passed from this life, may she/he now enjoy the lasting peace of heaven. *Lord, hear us.*
3. For all who are mourning at this time, that in this time of sorrow and sadness, the Lord may be their strength and consolation. *Lord, hear us.*
4. For those who may be worried or anxious at this time, that they may trust in God to care for them in all their needs. *Lord, hear us.*
5. For the sick, those at home and in hospital, that they may find strength in the power of the cross and find hope in their faith. *Lord, hear us.*

Priest: God, our shelter and our strength,
you listen in love to the cry of your people:
hear the prayers we offer for our departed brothers and sisters.
Cleanse them of their sins
and grant them the fullness of redemption.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen

Hymns for Funeral Celebrations

Many of the hymns and psalms suggested here can be found in the diocesan hymnal *Canaimís*.

Rite of Reception of the Body at the Church

Instrumental music or an appropriate hymn may be sung as the family enter the church with the deceased. The Psalm and the Gospel Acclamation may also be sung as part of the Liturgy of the Word.

Hymns or instrumental music may be sung/played at the end of this liturgy also.

Funeral Mass

Entrance Hymns

- Abide with me
- Be still for the presence of the Lord
- Be thou my vision
- Christ be beside me
- Christ be near at either hand
- Christ be our light
- Lord of all hopefulness

Responsorial Psalms

- Be not afraid (*Bob Dufford sj*)
- I rejoiced when I heard them say (*Ronan McDonagh*)
- I will walk in the presence of the Lord (*Fintan O'Carroll*)
- Mo ghrása, mo Dhia (*Liam Lawton*)
- My soul is longing for your peace (*Margaret Daly*)
- On eagle's wings (*Michael Joncas*)
- 'Sé an Tiarna m'aoire (*Fintan O'Carroll*)
- The Lord is my shepherd (*Tom Egan*)

Preparation of the Gifts

- Ag Críost an Síol
- All that I am
- Amazing grace
- Gifts of bread and wine
- Holy gifts for holy people
- In bread we bring you Lord
- Set your hearts on the higher gifts
- Take our bread

Instrumental Music is also appropriate at this point of the liturgy.

Communion Hymns

- Eat this bread
- I am the bread of life
- Love is his word
- Here I am, Lord
- Fáilte romhat a Rí na nAingeal
- One in body, heart and mind
- Soul of my Saviour
- Take and eat
- Céad míle fáilte romhat

Final Commendation

- Receive his/her soul

Recessional:

- Abide with me
- Amazing grace
- How great thou art
- Nearer my God to thee
- Now that the daylight fills the sky
- The cloud's veil
- You are mine (Do not be afraid)

Acknowledgements

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