

Preparing a Funeral Liturgy

OUTLINE OF THE MASS

As a source of reference, here a brief outline of the Catholic funeral rite during mass. A brief gathering rite serves as an introduction to the Liturgy of the Word. The Liturgy of the Eucharist follows, concluded by the Final Commendation and procession to the place of committal.

Gathering Rite

Greeting

the body and mourners are greeted ritually near the church entrance; the pall, a sign of baptism, is placed on the casket

Gathering Song

Opening Prayer

After the prayer, the priest sits down. That is the time for the first reader to go to the ambo by painting of Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Liturgy of the Word

Not merely readings, the proclamation of the Word is an encounter with God speaking through Scripture. Therefore, non-Biblical readings are not appropriate. Reading choices presented here are from the Church's newly-approved translation of the Lectionary for Mass, Book IV: Ritual and Votive Masses.

Old Testament Reading

"A" reading chosen by family

normally a text from the Old Testament (excluding the Psalms), from the New Testament during the Easter season.

Responsorial Psalm

(sung by cantor)

a musical selection of a Psalm or an appointed Biblical canticle, sung in refrain-verse format (hence "responsorial")

New Testament Reading

"B" reading chosen by family

a reading from the letters of Paul or of the apostles

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel

proclaimed from the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke or John and the choice of the Celebrant of the Funeral Mass

Homily

not a eulogy, but a reflection on the Scripture passages which have been proclaimed. Notes that the family provides help the priest customize his homily for the deceased.

General Intercessions

prayers for the deceased, the family, and the greater good of the Church and of the world

Those who will bring up the gifts should have looked to see where the table is located in the church so that they can easily go to it after the intercessions.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

"Eucharist" means thanksgiving, and is the sacramental encounter with God. The Liturgy of the Eucharist is the ritual action of the words of consecration: Jesus took, blessed, broke and gave the bread and wine as his Body and Blood.

Preparation of the Gifts

Eucharistic Prayer

the altar is prepared **and gifts of bread and wine are brought forward**

central prayer of the mass, and includes three acclamations: "Holy," the Memorial Acclamation and Great Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Breaking of the Bread

the Our Father is best recited, so all gathered can participate

the bread is broken; musically, accompanied by the "Lamb of God" litany

Communion

Prayer after Communion

the Body of Christ are distributed

Final Commendation

Invitation to Prayer

Silent Prayer

a time for individual prayer for the deceased

Song of Farewell

may be accompanied by the incensing of the body

Procession to the Place of

Committal