Preparing Catholic Funeral Liturgies

"I am the resurrection and the life"
John 11:25

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"By means of the funeral rites it has been the practice of the Church, as a tender mother, not simply to commend the dead to God but also to raise high the hope of its children and to give witness to its own faith in the future resurrection of the baptized in Christ" (Decree of Promulgation *Order of Christian Funerals*).

Catholic Funeral Liturgies as sacramentals are an outward sign of our faith in the resurrection of the dead, our hope in eternal life, and the coming of God's Kingdom when Jesus comes again to judge the living and the dead at the end of time. This is the mystery of our faith: We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection, until you come again. In the waters of Baptism, in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit sealed in Confirmation, and in the sharing of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist we proclaim by the way we live our lives our faith in the Gospel as disciples of Jesus Christ. "At the death of a Christian, whose life of faith was begun in the waters of baptism and strengthen 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" (*OCF* 4).

Why funerals? Christians celebrate the funeral rites to offer worship, praise, and thanksgiving to God for the gift of life which has been now returned to God, the author of life and the hope of the just (*OCF* 5). The Church proclaims her faith in the resurrection by commending the dead to the merciful love of God. Praying for the dead and participating in the funeral liturgies of the Church is an act of mercy, an act of fraternal charity. Though we are physically separated from our beloved deceased, by Christ Jesus we are still united in prayer, in faith, and in love in His body. The very celebration of the funeral rites brings hope and consolation to the living (*OCF* 7). We stand as living witnesses to our hope in eternal life in Jesus Christ. And finally, the funeral rites help those who participate remember God's mercy and judgment. For we are all reconciled to one another in Christ (See Eph 4:32). The brokenness of our lives is touched by Jesus'

healing hand and we are shown the tender compassion of God who wipes away every tear. For Jesus says, “Blessed are they who mourn, for the shall be comforted” (Mt 5:3).

What are the parts of Catholic Funerals? The Catholic funeral rite is divided into several parts. For this reason, the church recommends following the complete structure and praying through each of these parts of the funeral liturgy.

Vigil Service (Wake)

“At the vigil, the Christian community keeps watch with the family in prayer to the God of mercy and finds strength in Christ’s presence” (*OCF*, 56). The Vigil Service usually takes place during the period of visitation and viewing at the funeral home. It is a time to remember the life of the deceased and to commend him/her to God. In prayer we ask God to console us in our grief and give us strength to support one another.

The Vigil Service can take the form of a Service of the Word with readings from Sacred Scripture accompanied by reflection and prayers. It can also take the form of one of the prayers of the Office for the Dead from the Liturgy of the Hours. The pastoral staff will assist families to prepare and celebrate the Vigil Service. Near the end of the Vigil Service it is customary to have a time of sharing when family and friends are welcome to share memories and personal thoughts expressing their love and compassion for those who are mourning. For this reason, eulogies are usually encouraged to be done at the funeral home during visitation or at the Vigil Service. Some families also choose to pray the Rosary together during the time of visitation in addition to the Vigil Service.

Funeral Liturgy

The funeral liturgy is the central liturgical celebration of the Christian community for the deceased. When one of its members dies, the Church encourages the celebration of the funeral liturgy at a Mass. When Mass cannot be celebrated, a funeral liturgy outside Mass can be celebrated at the church or in the funeral home.

At the funeral liturgy, the Church gathers with the family and friends of the deceased to give praise and thanks to God for Christ's victory over sin and death, to commend the deceased to God's tender mercy and compassion, and to seek strength in the proclamation of the Paschal Mystery - the mystery of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. The funeral liturgy, therefore, is an act of worship, and not merely an expression of grief.

Rite of Committal (Burial or Interment)

The Rite of Committal, the conclusion of the funeral rite, is the final act of the community of faith in caring for the body of its deceased member. It should normally be celebrated at the place of committal, that is, beside the open grave or place of interment. In committing the body to its resting place, the community expresses the hope that, with all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith, the deceased awaits the glory of the resurrection. The Rite of Committal is an expression of the communion that exists between the Church on earth and the Church in heaven: the deceased passes with the farewell prayers of the community of believers into the welcoming company of those who need faith no longer, but see God face-to-face.

(excerpts from USCCB)

My loved one has died, what should I do next? After the death has been certified by local public safety or hospice care professionals the funeral home of your choice should be contacted. Feel free to schedule an appointment with the funeral home to begin the process of preparing for the funeral liturgy. Your funeral director will contact the parish to confirm the date, time and location of the various parts of the funeral liturgy. After meeting with the funeral director, a lay minister or priest from the parish will contact you and offer to meet with you and any family members you choose to begin preparing for the funeral liturgy. Please feel free to use this guide as an aid throughout the whole process. On the last page of

this booklet there is a form you can use to help choose various options for the funeral liturgy (ex: readings, hymns, etc.).

Other Common Questions and Considerations*:*

- **Are Catholics allowed to be cremated?**

The Church still recommends, and prefers, the devout custom of burying the bodies of the faithful, out of respect for the body that has given evidence of God's spirit enlivening our souls which are destined to be raised on the great Day of Resurrection. Nonetheless, the Church permits cremation as long as it is not an intentional denial of the Church's teaching regarding the Resurrection of the body. Note, however, the symbolism of the entire funeral liturgy is arranged such that cremation of the deceased takes place after the funeral liturgy and not before it allowing for the body to be present at the funeral liturgy. However, when this is not possible, the cremated remains are permitted to be present for the funeral liturgy, either the Mass or outside of Mass.

- **What do we do with the cremated remains after the funeral?**

The cremated remains must always be treated with respect, the same respect we attribute to the body which was "marked with the seal of the Trinity and became the temple of the Holy Spirit" (*OCF* 19). After the funeral they are to be interred or entombed, preferably in a Catholic cemetery, mausoleum or columbarium. The Rite of Committal should accompany the burial. They should never be separated or scattered or disposed in any way other than a dignified interment or entombment. It is a most ancient Christian custom to bury or entomb the bodies of the dead as a sign and symbol of the coming of Jesus at the end of time as we profess in the creed: "I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen." In ancient times, non-believers cremated and scattered the ashes as a denial of the resurrection and as a sign of disregard for human life. As Catholics we so value human life that even after death are mortal remains ought to be treated with proper respect and due reverence as an outward sign of our faith in the Resurrection of the Dead.

- **Do we have burials during the winter months?**

Holy Cross Cemetery in Alpena does accommodate winter burials.

- **Should we have a viewing of the body?**

The practice of 'lying in state' is a noble one and is encouraged by the Church. It is a great source of healing, closure, and comfort when we as family and friends pray at the remains of our loved one. Viewing can take place both at the funeral home during the Vigil prayer service and before the beginning of the funeral. One of the ritual moments of prayer is the closing of the casket and bringing our loved ones to the Church for the funeral. Part of that rite is praying the words of Psalm 122 which Jesus would have prayed on his way into the temple.

- **Does it cost anything to have a Catholic Funeral?**

There is no charge. You will not receive a bill for a Catholic Funeral. However, it is encouraged to make a donation to the Church to help defray some of the costs related to the Church's ministry. The ordinary donation to the parish is $200, which includes the ministry of the priest. Checks can be made payable to All Saints of Alpena.

For the music ministry during a Funeral Mass or Service, there is a stipend of $100 for the keyboardist and $100 for the cantor. Normally the funeral home arranges payment. Otherwise, the family can give the stipends directly to the keyboardist and cantor.

- **What about Parish Funeral luncheons? How does that work?**

One of the great ways to continue to heal after the death of a loved one is to see in a visible way the love of the whole parish community poured out during a funeral luncheon. Our parishes have groups of dedicated disciples who share freely of their time and talent to serve catered meals for families at the time of the funeral. Luncheons are available for those families opting to have the funeral service or Mass at one of our churches. All funeral luncheons will normally be held at All Saints Parish Hall (St. Anne Church) even if the Funeral is celebrated at one of the other

churches. The parish hall is not available if the funeral service is only at the funeral home. However, all caterers must supply to the parish office a Certificate of Insurance. Please contact the parish office before making any arrangements. A caterer is required for all funeral luncheons. The Funeral Luncheon ministry team provides all the setup, serving, and cleanup. The Funeral Luncheon ministry does not serve for Funerals that are celebrated later than 1pm. Donations for the Funeral Luncheon ministry are gladly accepted.

- **What about costs related to the cemetery?**

All costs related to the burial of the remains at Holy Cross Cemetery (1300 W Washington Ave, Alpena, MI 49707) are available by calling the cemetery office: 989.354.3831

- **Can we have a eulogy?**

Eulogy, which is generally a sharing of memories and stories by friends and family members, is best shared during the Vigil or at the memorial luncheon or reception that often follows the funeral. If a someone wishes to speak at the time of the funeral the best moment for that would be before the Funeral Mass begins.

- **Are all the churches of All Saints Parish available for Funeral Services/Masses**

Yes. In the 2015 merger decree from Bishop Raica, it was the desire that the churches of All Saints Parish (St. Anne, St. Bernard, St. John the Baptist, and St. Mary) be available to the faithful for occasional use such as funerals. It is expected that all funeral Masses be celebrated at St. Anne Church unless otherwise requested. There may be circumstances that make the use of one of the other churches difficult or impossible. All requests for use of St. Bernard, St. John the Baptist, and St. Mary must be made to the priests of All Saints Parish.

- **What if my loved one was cremated directly, and the funeral home is not involved in the Funeral Mass**

At All Saints Parish we wish to do our best to serve you and your family during this time of loss. We highly recommend that you

consult with a Licensed Funeral Director to help you arrange and conduct services. This will help you in planning with all family members. If you are unable to use a Licensed Funeral Director, All Saints Parish will assist you in planning and conducting the funeral.

For all Funerals/Memorial Masses in which the family chooses not to make use of the services of the Funeral Home at the service/Mass the following policies will be observed:

- *Cost:* All Saints Parish needs to compensate staff that takes on responsibility beyond normal work duties. Funeral services are not part of the planned staff duties. The church fee for funerals is $950 (without the services of a Licensed Funeral Director). Fee must be paid in cash, check or charge card prior to service. The fee includes the $100 for the keyboardist, $100 for the cantor, and $200 for the ministry of the priest and $550 for the organizing of the Funeral service.
- *Remains:* All Saints Parish will not allow the body of the deceased in the facility unless a Licensed Funeral Establishment is contracted and in in control of the remains. We do allow cremated remains in the sanctuary for the funeral service, but it is the sole responsibility of the family to bring the cremated remains to and from the church.
- *Family Responsibilities:* All obituaries for online, website postings and newspapers are the responsibility of the family. The family is also responsible for all federal, state and local documents and life insurance claims. You should consult with a Licensed Funeral Director or an Attorney to help you. The family will make mortuary and cemetery arrangements according to local laws and customs.
- *Flowers:* Flowers must be dropped off at the church during office hours or 2 hours prior to the funeral. Any flowers delivered on the day of the funeral

must be received 1 hour prior to the service to be displayed in the Sanctuary. After the service, the family is responsible to remove all flowers or donate them to the Parish.

- *Bequests or Donations:* The family will provide the appropriate envelope or if needed the church can provide a generic envelope.
- *Memorial Book & Programs:* Memorial Books for guests to sign is provided by the parish. Holy cards and programs are not.
- *Records:* The church will keep a basic record of services. The church will not keep statistical data or family records.
- *The Funeral:* All the other norms related to funerals with Licensed Funeral Directors organizing are to be followed.
- *Liability:* The family is responsible for all artifacts, cremated remains, jewelry, photos, flowers, and all personal effects. It is recommended that any item of value is removed, and custody taken by the proper authority.

Readings for Funeral Liturgy:

- **What Scripture readings are allowed?**

There are at least fifty-five various readings of Scriptures that the Church has specifically chosen for funerals. When you meet in your parish church to plan the funeral rites, they will be shared with you at that time or call in advance when pre-planning. Non-Scripture readings during the funeral during the Liturgy of the Word is not permitted. (See page 8)

- **Who can read the readings at the Funeral Mass?**

Readers during the Funeral Mass are Catholics who have been chosen by the parish community to assist in this particular role. All readers must be well prepared for the proclamation and believe in what they are proclaiming, engaging the gathered assembly through their eye contact, tone, rhythm and pace of the reading. The family may choose the readers. However, if you do not have anyone particular in mind we as a parish will be sure someone is present to proclaim the Word at the Funeral.

"In every celebration for the dead, the Church attaches great importance to the reading of the word of God. The readings proclaim to the assembly the Paschal Mystery, teach remembrance of the dead, convey the hope of being gathered together again in God's kingdom, and encourage the witness of Christian life. Above all, the readings tell of God's designs for a world in which suffering and death will relinquish their hold on all whom God has called his own. A careful selection and use of readings from Scripture for the funeral rites will provide the family with an opportunity to hear God speak to them in their needs, sorrows, fears, and hopes" (*OCF* 22).

Readings from the Old Testament:

#1OT - 2 Maccabees 12:43-46

He acted in an excellent and noble way as he had the resurrection of the dead in view.

A reading from the second Book of Maccabees

Judas, the ruler of Israel,
took up a collection among all his soldiers,
amounting to two thousand silver drachmas,
which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice.
In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way,
inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view;
for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again,
it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death.
But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward
that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness,
it was a holy and pious thought.
Thus he made atonement for the dead
that they might be freed from this sin.

The word of the Lord.

#2OT - Job 19:1, 23-27a
I know that my Vindicator lives.
A reading from the Book of Job

Job answered Bildad the Shuhite and said:
Oh, would that my words were written down!
Would that they were inscribed in a record:
That with an iron chisel and with lead
they were cut in the rock forever!
But as for me, I know that my Vindicator lives,
and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust;
Whom I myself shall see:
my own eyes, not another's, shall behold him;
And from my flesh I shall see God;
my inmost being is consumed with longing.

The word of the Lord.

#3OT - Wisdom 3:1-9 (short form, 3:1-6, 9)
As sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.

Omit the words in bolded brackets [ ] for the short form of this reading.
A reading from the Book of Wisdom

The souls of the just are in the hand of God,
and no torment shall touch them.
They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead;
and their passing away was thought an affliction
and their going forth from us, utter destruction.
But they are in peace.
For if before men, indeed they be punished,
yet is their hope full of immortality;
Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed,
because God tried them
and found them worthy of himself.
As gold in the furnace, he proved them,
and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.
[In the time of their visitation they shall shine,
and shall dart about as sparks through stubble;
They shall judge nations and rule over peoples,
and the LORD shall be their King forever.]
Those who trust in him shall understand truth,
and the faithful shall abide with him in love:
Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones,
and his care is with his elect.

The word of the Lord.

#4OT - Wisdom 4:7-15
An unsullied life, the attainment of old age.
A reading from the Book of Wisdom

The just man, though he die early,
shall be at rest.
For the age that is honorable comes not
with the passing of time,
nor can it be measured in terms of years.
Rather, understanding is the hoary crown for men,
and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age.

He who pleased God was loved;
he who lived among sinners was transported–
Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind
or deceit beguile his soul;
For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right
and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind.
Having become perfect in a short while,
he reached the fullness of a long career;
for his soul was pleasing to the LORD,
therefore he sped him out of the midst of wickedness.
But the people saw and did not understand,
nor did they take this into account.

The word of the Lord.

#5OT - Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9
He will destroy death forever.
A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

On this mountain the LORD of hosts
will provide for all peoples.
On this mountain he will destroy
the veil that veils all peoples,
The web that is woven over all nations;
he will destroy death forever.
The Lord GOD will wipe away
the tears from all faces;
The reproach of his people he will remove
from the whole earth; for the LORD has spoken.

On that day it will be said:
"Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us!
This is the LORD for whom we looked;
let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!"

The word of the Lord.

#6OT - Lamentations 3:17-26
It is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the Lord.
A reading from the Book of Lamentations

My soul is deprived of peace,
    I have forgotten what happiness is;
I tell myself my future is lost,
    all that I hoped for from the LORD.
The thought of my homeless poverty
    is wormwood and gall;
Remembering it over and over
    leaves my soul downcast within me.
But I will call this to mind,
    as my reason to have hope:

The favors of the LORD are not exhausted,
    his mercies are not spent;
They are renewed each morning,
    so great is his faithfulness.
My portion is the LORD, says my soul;
    therefore will I hope in him.

Good is the LORD to one who waits for him,
    to the soul that seeks him;
It is good to hope in silence
    for the saving help of the LORD.

The word of the Lord.

#7OT - Daniel 12:1-3
Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake.
A reading from the Book of the Prophet Daniel

In those days, I, Daniel, mourned
    and heard this word of the Lord:
At that time there shall arise
    Michael, the great prince,
    guardian of your people;

It shall be a time unsurpassed in distress
    since nations began until that time.
At that time your people shall escape,
    everyone who is found written in the book.

Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake;
Some shall live forever,
    others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace.
But the wise shall shine brightly
    like the splendor of the firmament,
And those who lead the many to justice
    shall be like the stars forever.

The word of the Lord.

#8 OT – Ecclesiastes 3:1-8
No one can determine the right time to act
A reading from the Book Ecclesiastes

There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for every affair under the heavens.
A time to give birth, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to uproot the plant.
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to tear down, and a time to build.
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance.
A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them;
a time to embrace, and a time to be far from embraces.
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away.
A time to rend, and a time to sew;
a time to be silent, and a time to speak.
A time to love, and a time to hate;
a time of war, and a time of peace.

The word of the Lord.

During Easter Time, the First Reading is instead selected from among certain New Testament Readings:

#1E Acts 10:34-43 (short form, 10:34-36, 42-43)
He is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead.
Omit the words in bolded brackets [ ] for the short form of this reading
A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter proceeded to speak, saying:
"In truth, I see that God shows no partiality.
Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly
is acceptable to him.
You know the word that he sent to the children of Israel
as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all,
[what has happened all over Judea,
beginning in Galilee after the baptism
that John preached,
how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth
with the Holy Spirit and power.
He went about doing good
and healing all those oppressed by the Devil,
for God was with him.
We are witnesses of all that he did
both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.
They put him to death by hanging him on a tree.
This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible,
not to all the people, but to us,
the witnesses chosen by God in advance,
who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.]
He commissioned us to preach to the people
and testify that he is the one appointed by God
as judge of the living and the dead.
To him all the prophets bear witness,
that everyone who believes in him
will receive forgiveness of sins through his name."

The word of the Lord.

#2E Revelation 14:13
Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.
A reading from the Book of Revelation

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this:
Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on."
"Yes," said the Spirit,
"let them find rest from their labors,
for their works accompany them."

The word of the Lord.

#3E Revelation 20:11—21:1
The dead were judged according to their deeds.
A reading from the Book of Revelation

I, John, saw a large white throne and the one who was sitting on it.
The earth and the sky fled from his presence
and there was no place for them.
I saw the dead, the great and the lowly, standing before the throne,
and scrolls were opened.
Then another scroll was opened, the book of life.
The dead were judged according to their deeds,
by what was written in the scrolls.
The sea gave up its dead;
then Death and Hades gave up their dead.
All the dead were judged according to their deeds.
Then Death and Hades were thrown into the pool of fire.
(This pool of fire is the second death.)
Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life
was thrown into the pool of fire.
Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.
The former heaven and the former earth had passed away,
and the sea was no more.

The word of the Lord.

#4E Revelation 21:1-5a, 6b-7
There shall be no more death.
A reading from the Book of Revelation

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth.
The former heaven and the former earth had passed away,
and the sea was no more.
I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem,
coming down out of heaven from God,
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,
"Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race.
He will dwell with them and they will be his people
and God himself will always be with them as their God.
He will wipe every tear from their eyes,
and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain,
for the old order has passed away."

The One who sat on the throne said,
"Behold, I make all things new."
I am the Alpha and the Omega,
the beginning and the end.
To the thirsty I will give a gift
from the spring of life-giving water.
The victor will inherit these gifts,
and I shall be his God,
and he will be my son."

The word of the Lord.

Suggested Responsorial Psalms (sung by the cantor):

1. Psalm 23: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.
2. Psalm 25: To you, O Lord, I lift my soul
3. Psalm 27: The Lord is my light and my salvation

4. Psalm 42: My soul is thirsting for the living God: when shall I see him face to face?
5. Psalm 63: My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.
6. Psalm 103: The Lord is kind and merciful
7. Psalm 116: I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living
8. Psalm 122: I rejoiced when I heard them say: Let us go to the house of the Lord.
9. Psalm 130: Out of the depths, I cry to you, Lord.
10. Psalm 143: O Lord, hear my prayer

Readings from the New Testament:

#1NT Romans 5:5-11

Since we are now justified by his Blood, we will be saved through him from the wrath.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:
Hope does not disappoint,
because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts
through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.
For Christ, while we were still helpless,
died at the appointed time for the ungodly.
Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person,
though perhaps for a good person
one might even find courage to die.
But God proves his love for us
in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.
How much more then, since we are now justified by his Blood,
will we be saved through him from the wrath.
Indeed, if, while we were enemies,
we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son,
how much more, once reconciled,
will we be saved by his life.
Not only that,
but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The word of the Lord.

#2NT Romans 5:17-21
Where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more.
A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:
If, by the transgression of the one,
death came to reign through that one,
how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace
and of the gift of justification
come to reign in life through the one Jesus Christ.
In conclusion, just as through one transgression
condemnation came upon all,
so, through one righteous act,
acquittal and life came to all.
For just as through the disobedience of the one man
the many were made sinners,
so through the obedience of the one
the many will be made righteous.
The law entered in so that transgression might increase
but, where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more, so that,
as sin reigned in death,
grace also might reign through justification for eternal life
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

#3NT Romans 6:3-9 (short form, 6:3-4, 8-9)
We too might live in newness of life.
Omit the words in bolded brackets [ ] for the short form of this reading.
A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:
Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus
were baptized into his death?
We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death,

so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead
by the glory of the Father,
we too might live in newness of life.

[For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his,
we shall also be united with him in the resurrection.
We know that our old self was crucified with him,
so that our sinful body might be done away with,
that we might no longer be in slavery to sin.
For a dead person has been absolved from sin.]
If, then, we have died with Christ,
we believe that we shall also live with him.
We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more;
death no longer has power over him.

The word of the Lord.

#4NT Romans 8:14-23

We also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:
Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,
but you received a spirit of adoption,
through which we cry, Abba, "Father!"
The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit
that we are children of God,
and if children, then heirs,
heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ,
if only we suffer with him
so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing
compared with the glory to be revealed for us.
For creation awaits with eager expectation
the revelation of the children of God;

for creation was made subject to futility,
not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it,
in hope that creation itself
would be set free from slavery to corruption
and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God.
We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now;
and not only that, but we ourselves,
who have the firstfruits of the Spirit,
we also groan within ourselves
as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

The word of the Lord.

#5NT Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39
What will separate us from the love of Christ?
A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:
If God is for us, who can be against us?
He did not spare his own Son
but handed him over for us all,
will he not also give us everything else along with him?
Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones?
It is God who acquits us.
Who will condemn?
It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised,
who also is at the right hand of God,
who indeed intercedes for us.
What will separate us from the love of Christ?
Will anguish, or distress or persecution, or famine,
or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?

No, in all these things, we conquer overwhelmingly
through him who loved us.
For I am convinced that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor principalities,

nor present things, nor future things,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor any other creature will be able to separate us
from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

#6NT Romans 14:7-9, 10c-12
Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.
A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters:
No one lives for oneself,
and no one dies for oneself.
For if we live, we live for the Lord,
and if we die, we die for the Lord;
so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.
For this is why Christ died and came to life,
that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.
Why then do you judge your brother?
Or you, why do you look down on your brother?
For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God;
for it is written:

As I live, says the Lord, every knee
shall bend before me,
and every tongue shall give praise to God.

So then each of us shall give an accounting of himself to God.

The word of the Lord.

#7NT 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 (short form, 15:20-23)
So too in Christ shall all be brought to life.
Omit the words in bolded brackets [ ] for the short form of this reading.
A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

Christ has been raised from the dead,
the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.
For since death came through a man,
the resurrection of the dead came also through man.
For just as in Adam all die,
so too in Christ shall all be brought to life,
but each one in proper order:
Christ the firstfruits;
then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ;
[then comes the end,
when he hands over the Kingdom to his God and Father.
For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.
The last enemy to be destroyed is death,
for "he subjected everything under his feet."
But when it says that everything has been subjected,
it is clear that it excludes the one who subjected everything to him.
When everything is subjected to him,
then the Son himself will also be subjected
to the one who subjected everything to him,
so that God may be all in all.]

The word of the Lord.

#8NT - 1 Corinthians 15:51-57
Death is swallowed up in victory.
A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:
Behold, I tell you a mystery.
We shall not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed,
in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet.
For the trumpet will sound,
the dead will be raised incorruptible,
and we shall be changed.
For that which is corruptible must clothe itself with incorruptibility,

and that which is mortal must clothe itself with immortality.
And when this which is corruptible clothes itself with incorruptibility
and this which is mortal clothes itself with immortality,
then the word that is written shall come about:

Death is swallowed up in victory.
Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?

The sting of death is sin,
and the power of sin is the law.
But thanks be to God who gives us the victory
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

#9NT - 2 Corinthians 4:14—5:1

What is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal.

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:
Knowing that the One who raised the Lord Jesus
will raise us also with Jesus
and place us with you in his presence.
Everything indeed is for you,
so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people
may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God.
Therefore, we are not discouraged;
rather, although our outer self is wasting away,
our inner self is being renewed day by day.
For this momentary light affliction
is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison,
as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen;
for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal.

For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent,
should be destroyed,
we have a building from God,
a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

The word of the Lord.

#10NT - 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10

We have a building from God, eternal in heaven.

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:
We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent,
should be destroyed,
we have a building from God,
a dwelling not made with hands,
eternal in heaven.

We are always courageous,
although we know that while we are at home in the body
we are away from the Lord,
for we walk by faith, not by sight.
Yet we are courageous,
and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord.
Therefore, we aspire to please him,
whether we are at home or away.
For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,
so that each may receive recompense,
according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

The word of the Lord.

#11NT - Philippians 3:20-21

He will change our lowly bodies to conform to his glory.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians

Brothers and sisters:

Our citizenship is in heaven,
and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.
He will change our lowly body
to conform with his glorified Body
by the power that enables him also
to bring all things into subjection to himself.

The word of the Lord.

#12NT - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
Thus we shall always be with the Lord.
A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters,
about those who have fallen asleep,
so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope.
For if we believe that Jesus died and rose,
so too will God, through Jesus,
bring with him those who have fallen asleep.
Indeed, we tell you this, on the word of the Lord,
that we who are alive,
who are left until the coming of the Lord,
will surely not precede those who have fallen asleep.
For the Lord himself, with a word of command,
with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God,
will come down from heaven,
and the dead in Christ will rise first.
Then we who are alive, who are left,
will be caught up together with them in the clouds
to meet the Lord in the air.
Thus we shall always be with the Lord.
Therefore, console one another with these words.

The word of the Lord.

#13NT - 2 Timothy 2:8-13
If we have died with him we shall also live with him.
A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy

Beloved:
Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David:
such is my Gospel, for which I am suffering,
even to the point of chains, like a criminal.
But the word of God is not chained.
Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen,
so that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus,
together with eternal glory.
This saying is trustworthy:
If we have died with him
we shall also live with him;
if we persevere
we shall also reign with him.
But if we deny him
he will deny us.
If we are unfaithful
he remains faithful,
for he cannot deny himself.

The word of the Lord.

#14NT - 1 John 3:1-2
We shall see him as he is.
A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

Beloved:
See what love the Father has bestowed on us
that we may be called the children of God.
Yet so we are.
The reason the world does not know us
is that it did not know him.
Beloved, we are God's children now;
what we shall be has not yet been revealed.
We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him,

for we shall see him as he is.

The word of the Lord.

#15NT - 1 John 3:14-16
We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers.
A reading from the first Letter of Saint John

Beloved:
We know that we have passed from death to life
because we love our brothers.
Whoever does not love remains in death.
Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer,
and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him.
The way we came to know love
was that he laid down his life for us;
so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

The word of the Lord.

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Readings from the Gospel (read by the Priest/Deacon): The celebrant will normally choose this reading in preparation for the homily at the funeral. If there is a particular Gospel passage that speaks to you please let us know.

1. Matthew 5:1-12a
2. Matthew 11:25-30
3. Matthew 25:1-13
4. Matthew 25:31-46
5. Mark 15:33-39; 16:1-6 (short form, 15:33-39)
6. Luke 7:11-17
7. Luke 12:35-40
8. Luke 23:33, 39-43

9. Luke 23:44-46, 50, 52-53; 24:1-6a (short form, 23:44-46, 50, 52-53)
10. Luke 24:13-35 (short form, 24:13-16, 28-35)
11. John 5:24-29
12. John 6:37-40
13. John 11:17-27 (short form, 11:21-27)
14. John 11:32-45
15. John 12:23-28 (short form, 12:23-26)
16. John 14:1-6
17. John 17:24-26
18. John 19:17-18, 25-39

What music is suggested for funeral liturgies?

"Music is integral to the Funeral rites. It allows the community to express convictions and feelings that word alone may fail to convey. It has the power to console and uplift the mourners and to strengthen the unity of the assembly in faith and love. The texts of the songs chosen for a particular celebration should express the paschal mystery of the Lord's suffering, death, and triumph over death and should be related to the readings from Scripture." (*OCF* 30) The music of the church speaks to our Catholic faith in the resurrection of the dead and life everlasting in Jesus Christ. Below is a list of suggested hymns. Occasionally families wish to play music that is non-liturgical and not appropriate for the liturgy. The best time for popular non-liturgical music is during the time of visitation or at the luncheon – that is outside of the funeral liturgy.

Suggested Hymns:

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus
Amazing Grace
Ave Maria
Be Not Afraid
Be Thou My Vision
Blest Are They
Canticle of the Sun
Center of My Life
Christ, Be Our Light
Eat This Bread
Eye Has Not Seen
For All the Saints
From All that Dwells below the Skies
Gift of Finest Wheat
Hail Mary: Gentle Woman
Here I am, Lord
Hosea (Come Back to Me)
How Can I Keep from Singing
How Great Thou Art
How Lovely is Your Dwelling Place
I Am the Bread of Life
I Heard the Voice of Jesus
I Know that My Redeemer Lives
Let There Be Peace on Earth
Like a Shepherd
Lord of All Hopefulness
O God, Our Help in Ages Past
On Eagle's Wings
Only in God
Only This I Want
Panis Angelicus (solo)
Prayer of St. Francis (Make Me a Channel of
Precious Lord, Take My Hand
Sing with All the Saints in Glory (Tune: Ode
Soon and Very Soon
Taste and See
The King of Love My Shepherd is
The Lord is My Light
The Supper of the Lord
This Alone
To Jesus Christ, Our Sovereign King
Unless A Grain of Wheat
We Have Been Told
We Remember
We Will Rise Again
What Wondrous Love is This
You are Mine
You are Near
You Satisfy the Hungry Heart

Funeral Liturgy Preparation Sheet:

Use this page to record any of your preferences and bring it with you to the meeting with priests or pastoral ministers of the parish.

Name of the Deceased: _____

Contact Person: _____

Part I: Wake Service: _____

_____

Part II: Funeral Mass/Service: _____

Opening Hymn: _____

1st Reading (#1-7OT or #1-4E): _____

Name of Reader: _____

Responsorial Psalm: _____

2nd Reading (#1-15NT): _____

Name of Reader: _____

Gospel: _____

Offertory Hymn: _____

Who will bring up the gifts of bread and wine: _____

_____

Communion Hymn: _____

Recessional Hymn: _____

Part III: Burial: _____

_____

The information in this booklet was collected and written for use in All Saints Parish (including the churches of: St. Anne, St. Bernard, St. John the Baptist, and St. Mary) serving Alpena County, MI.

Updated: 9-2-2021

Sources:

1. Order of Christian Funerals –
2. United States Council of Catholic Bishops - http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/bereavement-and-funerals/overview-of-catholic-funeral-rites.cfm
3. The Q&A are excerpted from the Archdiocese of Detroit's website: http://www.aod.org/being-catholic/prayer-and-worship/christian-funerals/directives-for-catholic-funerals-questions-and-answers/
4. Diocese of Gaylord
5. *Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States, second typical edition*, Copyright © 2001, 1998, 1997, 1986, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.