

Rite of Committal

The graveside service takes place immediately following the Funeral Mass. This brief prayer service includes final prayers and the blessing of the grave or mausoleum space.

Funeral Dinner

A funeral dinner, provided by the Basilica Parish, is available upon request. Families wishing a funeral dinner must make arrangements with the funeral home. Requests must include the estimated number of attendants at the dinner.

Important Information About Cremation

Our Catholic Faith enjoins us to have a profound respect for the body of the deceased, since our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 6:19). Although cremation is permitted, Catholics are obliged to respect cremated remains, both in handling and in final disposition. Furthermore, the directives of the Church urge the faithful to postpone cremation until after the Funeral Mass if possible:

“The Church clearly prefers and urges that the body of the deceased be present for the funeral rites, since the presence of the human body better expresses the values which the Church affirms in those rites.” (Order of Christian Funerals #413)

When cremation is chosen, *cremated remains are to be placed in a mausoleum or in ground that is blessed specifically to receive the body or cremated remains of the faithful.*

Scattering of ashes or the reserving of ashes in the home is not in keeping with the respect owed to the cremated remains of loved ones and is not permitted (see Order of Christian Funerals #417).

THE BASILICA OF SAINT MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION

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GUIDELINES FOR FUNERAL MASSES IN A BASILICA

The death of a loved one is a very difficult time for a family. Be assured of our prayers and support. Above all, we urge you to be confident in the love and mercy of the Lord.

These guidelines are offered to you to assist in your preparations for a Catholic funeral.

According to the guidelines set forth by the Catholic Church (contained in the Order of Christian Funerals), a Catholic funeral consists of three separate ceremonies: the Vigil Service, the Funeral Mass and the Rite of Committal.

The Vigil Service

The Vigil Service (or Wake Service) takes place at the Funeral Home the day prior the Funeral Mass. It typically includes special prayers and readings from Scripture.

The Funeral Mass

The Funeral Mass, in its prayers and readings, has a very clear and intended focus. It is a prayer of petition for the deceased, a prayer commending the deceased to God's tender mercy and compassion, a prayer rooted in the hope engendered by the Death and Resurrection of Christ.

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let Perpetual Light shine upon them.
May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.*

Amen.



To respect the intent and integrity of the Church's Liturgical Rites, the following guidelines must be followed:

- ❖ Appreciations or eulogies by family members or friends are not permitted during the Funeral Mass. In the directives for the funeral Mass it is stated: "A brief homily, based on the readings, should always be given at the funeral liturgy, but never any kind of eulogy. The homilist should dwell on God's compassionate love and on the paschal mystery of the Lord proclaimed in the Scripture readings."

Remarks by family member or friends may take place at the Vigil Service, after the Rite of Committal in the cemetery or when the family and friends gather.

- ❖ Typically the presider chooses the scriptural readings for the Funeral Mass. If the family wishes to select readings, they must be taken from the Order of Christian Funerals. It is preferable that those chosen to be readers are trained Lectors from a Catholic parish.
- ❖ Secular songs, poems and texts devoid of a Christian content are out of place in the funeral liturgy. Typically, appropriate hymns are chosen for the Funeral Mass by the Basilica Music Director.

Families wishing to select hymns may choose them from the pre-approved list of hymns available upon request.

Since the liturgy of a basilica is to be an example for liturgical practice in the diocese, it is paramount that these guidelines be observed for Funerals taking place at the basilica.

If a visiting priest is officiating at the Funeral Mass he should be informed of these regulations and asked to abide by them.