

## PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED

The Catholic Church teaches that all who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. Thus, family and friends are encouraged to remember their deceased loved ones in prayer. From the beginning the Church has honored the memory of the dead and offered prayers in suffrage for them, above all the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Mass, so that, thus purified, they may attain the beatific vision of God.

**PRAYER** God of faithfulness, in Your wisdom You have called Your servant (Name) out of this world; release him/her from the bonds of sin, and welcome him/her into Your Presence, so the he/she may enjoy eternal light and peace and be raised up in glory with all Your saints. Amen.



## FUNERAL LUNCHEONS

Both St. Agnes and Sacred Heart have facilities that allow for a luncheon to be prepared and served following the service. The luncheon can be provided either before or after going to the cemetery. Please visit with the priest or deacon for more information.

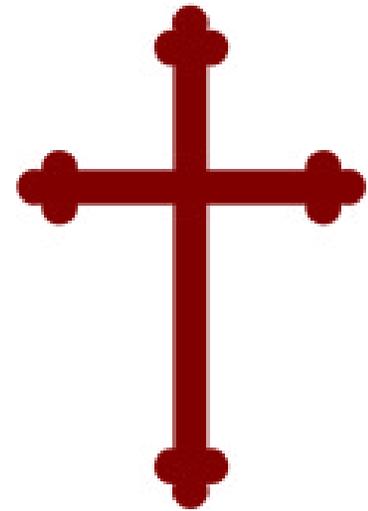
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## PREPARING FOR A CATHOLIC FUNERAL



ST. AGNES CATHOLIC CHURCH  
SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH

## WITH SYMPATHY...

*Almighty God, Father of all mercies and giver of all comfort: Deal graciously, we pray thee, with those who mourn, that casting every care on thee, they may know the consolation of thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Our prayerful sympathies go out to you.  
May your loved one rest in the Lord's peace.

## A CATHOLIC FUNERAL

**As you prepare for a Catholic funeral, the information that follows will be helpful in making necessary choices.**

If you have not yet contacted the Catholic parish where you would like to have the funeral, your funeral home can help you. This should be done as soon as possible. The priest or deacon who will preside at the liturgy will want to visit with you prior to the liturgy. Funeral directors are familiar with Catholic customs, guidelines, and requirements. Some possible choices are listed below:

**Wake and Visitation** may be the night before, with or without a Prayer Service, in the church or at the funeral home.

**Visitation** in the church, prior to the Mass of Christian Burial, may be at the place designated by each church, with the casket closed or open.

**Mass of Christian Burial** begins at the entrance to the church proper.

After the blessing with Holy Water, the family may spread the pall over the casket.

The family may be invited to participate in the **selection of readings** from the Bible to be used during Mass. One reading is normally taken from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament. In addition, there is one Gospel reading, often selected by the priest. (There are some suggested readings appropriate for funerals. The priest or deacon can help with this.) **Catholic family members or friends may read the first and second readings.** The Gospel is read by a deacon or the priest, followed by the homily.

It is possible for family members or friends to **present the gifts** of bread and wine to be used for Mass. In the Mass, through the words entrusted by Christ to His Church, these gifts become the Body and Blood of Christ, the source of our hope in the resurrection.

Music is an ancient part of celebrating our Catholic tradition in moments of great joy or deep sorrow. Sacred music is one way of expressing our faith and hope in eternal life. Some beautiful and beloved music express this faith more readily than others. There is much beautiful traditional and contemporary **sacred music which can be chosen by family** in addition to the sung parts of the Mass. The parish organist and/or song leader can help. *Secular music and songs are more appropriate at wakes or funeral luncheons. Previously recorded music may not be used during the liturgy.* If in doubt, check with the priest or deacon.

The Mass of Christian Burial is time set aside to pray for the deceased and for family and friends to be consoled by the words of Christ, "whoever believes in me, though he should die, will come to life." (Jn. 11:26) While the Mass of Christian Burial **allows for a short 'remembrance of the deceased'** by a family member or friend, this is optional, *within provided guidelines.*

**Lengthy or multiple eulogies are best incorporated into the wake service or the luncheon program.**

**The Rite of Committal** concludes the Mass of Christian Burial. Whenever possible, it is celebrated at the site of committal - at the open grave or place of interment.

*"The Christian faithful, in the presence of the body of one who has died, are confronted with the mystery of life and death. The body, even in death, calls to mind a personal story of faith, loving family bonds, friendships, caring words and deeds of kindness offered by one who has died. This same body, washed in the waters of Baptism, anointed with Holy Oils and fed with the Bread of Life is recognized by the Church as a Temple of the Holy Spirit, destined for resurrection and meant for glory. The Catholic Church urges that the body be present for funeral rites since this gives better expression to the truths that the Church affirms." - Order of Christian Funerals*

## WHEN THINKING ABOUT CREMATION

Cremation is allowed, preferably *after* the Mass of Christian Burial in the church. However, it is possible to have the cremains present in the church for the Mass of Christian Burial. Reverent disposition of the cremains **includes interment in the ground** or above the ground in a mausoleum. Cremains should not be kept in homes, scattered abroad, or worn in jewelry. Cremains are treated like a human body.

Adapted from guidelines first published by the Diocese of Duluth in 2005