



# **The Collaborative Parishes of:** **Our Lady of Lourdes** **St. Kateri Tekakwitha** **Saint Peter**

## **A Guide for Preparing Funeral Liturgies**

### **Introduction**

"In the face of death, the Church confidently proclaims that God has created each person for eternal life and that Jesus, the Son of God, by his death and resurrection, has broken the chains of sin and death that bound humanity;" Order of Christian Funerals ©1989

When we suffer the passing of a loved one or face the certainty of our own death, the Church's funeral rites provide a place where we can grieve, remember, face our fear, give thanks, celebrate, and above all connect our personal human experience to that of the believing community and to the story of Jesus.

### **Scheduling of Liturgies**

The Order of Christian Funerals is divided into three rites:

- **Vigil (wake) and related rites and prayers:**  
The vigil for the deceased is the principal rite celebrated by the Christian community in the time following death and before the funeral liturgy. Words of remembrance may be spoken at this time. The vigil may be held in the home of the deceased, in the funeral home or in the church.

- **Funeral Liturgy:**

Because the funeral liturgy is the central celebration for the deceased it should be scheduled for a time that permits as many of the Christian community as possible to be present.

- **Rite of Committal:**

The rite of committal at the conclusion of the funeral rites is the final act of the community of faith in caring for the body or ashes of its deceased.

Whenever possible, the rite of committal is to be celebrated at the site of committal, that is, beside the open grave or place of interment.

### **Planning the Rites**

Whenever possible the family should be involved in the planning of the funeral liturgy. This section will help guide you through this process. The family is invited to fill out the Funeral Mass Selection Form included with this booklet indicating their choices in the appropriate places.

- Pallbearers
- Placement of the pall and Christian symbols
- Readings
- Readers
- Music
- Presentation of the gifts
- Communion
- Words of Remembrance

### **Pallbearers**

Family members or friends of the deceased may be selected as pallbearers. This can be coordinated with the funeral director. If the family does not wish to have members or friends as pallbearers the funeral director can provide this service.

### **Placing of the Pall**

A funeral pall, reminding us of the garment given at Baptism and therefore symbolizing our life in Christ, is draped over the coffin at the beginning of the Liturgy. Family members or friends are encouraged to do this, although others may

likewise do the placing of the pall. The use of this pall also signifies that all are equal in the eyes of God.

### **Symbols of the Christian Life**

One symbol of the Christian life may be carried in the procession by a family member or friend and placed on the coffin at the conclusion of the entrance procession. The family provides the symbol.

This may be a Bible or a book of the Gospels as a sign that Christians live by the Word of God and fidelity to the Word leads to eternal life. It might also be a cross: a sign that the Christian is marked by the cross in Baptism and through Jesus' suffering on the cross is brought to the victory of His Resurrection. The priest may recite a prayer to accompany this placing of the symbol on the coffin.

### **Readings**

The family, in collaboration with the priest, can select one text each from the Old Testament Readings, Responsorial Psalms, and New Testament Readings. Non-biblical texts may not replace scriptural readings at Mass.

If there is a family member or friend who is a parish reader or is comfortable with public speaking, you may want to invite them to do the readings, which are always proclaimed from the lectionary. The readings provided in this guide are for preparation purposes. ***The selected readers may wish to meet with the Bereavement team in order to prepare for the Liturgy.***

### **Music**

Funeral music reflects not only the grief of the family, but the whole truth about the life and death of a Christian: "God's love for each and the promise of eternal life." This is why the Church insists that only liturgical music be used and that the primary focus should be on the assembly's song.

The choice of music from various liturgical seasons, familiar to the community at Sunday Mass is good practice. Easter songs, which speak of the Lord's Resurrection, are particularly appropriate.

Ideally there should be a balance between music expressing grief, loss and the need for comfort, and music expressing the believing community's joyful hope that both the deceased and those who celebrate the rites are entering into the risen life of Jesus, the Lord. Music selections are inserted into this booklet.

## **Presentation of Gifts**

The Church encourages family members or friends to bring to the altar the gifts of bread and wine.

## **Holy Communion**

The Church encourages those present, who are spiritually prepared, to receive communion under both species. While everyone receives the whole Christ under the form of bread alone, it is a fuller sign that we truly do eat and drink the Lord's body and blood when we communicate from the chalice as well.

## **Words of Remembrance**

A member or a friend of the family may speak in remembrance of the deceased following the prayer after communion or at the celebrant's discretion, at the beginning of the funeral liturgy. The funeral rite offers the option for some words of remembrance. One speaker may be chosen by the family to offer a typed up presentation that should be simple, brief, well prepared, and appropriate for its place during Mass.

Inside jokes, long stories or crude language are not appropriate. **Please keep the length to five minutes (about one typed page).** Within the context of the funeral liturgy, the tone of such a personal reflection should remain one of faith and hope, and should emphasize the way the deceased lived the Christian life. Words of remembrance are also appropriate at the Vigil/Wake or at the Committal.

## **Flowers**

During the season of Lent flowers are not used in the church. During all other times of the year, the funeral director brings in memorial flowers to decorate the sanctuary.

## **Memorial Mass**

The funeral is called a "Memorial Mass" when the body or cremated remains (called cremains) of the deceased are not present for the Liturgy. Except for the remains, all other aspects of the Mass are the same as a funeral. Members of the family should be actively involved in choosing the Scripture readings and music.

## **Worship Aid**

Our Collaborative has a sample worship aid available. Some families choose to have one of these for the Mass. It is an option.

# **OLD TESTAMENT READINGS**

Job 19:1, 23-27

***A Reading from the Book of Job***

Then Job answered 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!

As for me, I know that my vindicator lives,

And that he will at last stand forth upon the dust.

This will happen when my skin has been stripped off,

And from my flesh I will see God:

I will see for myself,

My own eyes, not another's, will behold him:

My inmost being is consumed with longing.

**The Word of the Lord**

***A Reading from the Book of Wisdom***

The righteous one, 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 passes for gray hair, and an unsullied life is the attainment of old age. The one who pleased God was loved, living 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 that consideration into account.

**The Word of the Lord**

***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 to others, indeed, they seem 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 judgment they shall shine and 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 the elect.

**The Word of the Lord**



Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

***A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes***

There is an appointed time for everything,  
And a time for everything under the heavens.  
A time to be born 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**

***A Reading from the Book of Lamentations***

My soul is deprived of peace, I have forgotten what happiness is; my enduring hope, I said, has perished before the LORD. The thought of my wretched homelessness is wormwood and poison; remembering it over and over, my soul is downcast. But this I will call to mind; therefore I will hope: the LORD's acts of mercy are not exhausted, his compassion is not spent; they are renewed each morning— great is your faithfulness! The LORD is my portion, I tell myself, therefore I will hope in him. The LORD is good to those who trust in him, to the one that seeks him; it is good to hope in silence for the LORD's deliverance.

**The Word of the Lord**

***A Reading from the Second Book of Maccabees***

Judas [the ruler of Israel] then 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 in mind; for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. 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 absolved from their sin.

**The Word of the Lord**

Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9

***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**

Daniel 12:1-3

***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**

# **NEW TESTAMENT READINGS**

***A Reading from the Letter of St. 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 that has been given to us. For Christ, while we were still helpless, yet 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**

***A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans***

Brothers and Sisters: If, by the transgression of one person, 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 person 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 one person the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of 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**



Romans 6:3-9

***A Reading from the Letter of St. 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**

***A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans***

Brothers and Sisters: Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children 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 first fruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

**The Word of the Lord**

Romans 8:31-35, 37-39

***A Reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans***

Brothers and Sisters: What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how 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**

1 Corinthians 15:20-28

***A Reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians***

Brothers and Sisters: Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead came also through a human being. 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 first fruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, when he has destroyed every sovereignty and every authority and power. 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**

***A Reading from the First Letter of St. 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**

2 Corinthians 4:14-15:1

*A Reading from the Second Letter of St. 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**

2 Corinthians 5: 1, 6-10

***A Reading from the Second Letter of St. 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. So 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 one may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

**The Word of the Lord**

Philippians 3:20-21

***A Reading from the Letter of St. 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**



1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18

*A Reading from the First Letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians*

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers, 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**

2 Timothy 2:8-13

***A Reading from the Second Letter of St. Paul to the 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**

1 John 3: 1-2

***A Reading from the First Letter of St. 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. Everyone who has this hope  
based on him makes himself pure, as he is pure.

**The Word of the Lord**

1 John 3: 14-16

***A Reading from the First Letter of St. 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.

If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him? Children, let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.

**The Word of the Lord**

Revelation 14:13

***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**

Revelation 20:11-21:1

### ***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**

***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**

**Easter Season**

**First Reading**



## **First Reading – Easter Season**

*Acts of the Apostles 10:34-36, 42-43*

### ***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. 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**

**First Reading – Easter Season**

*Book of Revelation 14:13*

***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**

## **First Reading – Easter Season**

*Book of Revelation 21:1-5a, 6b-7*

### ***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**

## **First Reading – Easter Season**

*Book of Revelation 20: 11-21:1*

### ***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**