

## **Participating in the Funeral Liturgy**

The funeral liturgy is a time to celebrate the gift of the person whose life has graced our own. Participation in this liturgy gives us the opportunity to celebrate the person's life in the fullest way and to give thanks to God for the gift that the person has been to us.

As the casket is moved into the church family members are invited to place the pall on the casket after it has been sprinkled with holy water connecting the death of a loved one to their Baptism. This loving act offers the family an opportunity to "clothe" their loved one not only in the white garment but with their love as they enter into prayer for them.

As the casket is moved into the main body of the church all those gathered are invited to sing the Gathering Hymn which begins the liturgy. Family members or friends of the loved one are invited to read the Scripture readings and the Intercessions at the funeral liturgy. The bereavement minister who meets with you will help you to choose these and give you copies for those who will be reading.

Family members may also present the gifts of bread and wine during the presentation of the gifts. Once again all are encouraged to sing the Presentation Hymn that accompanies this part of the liturgy.

All Catholics are welcome to receive the communion. Those in attendance that are not Catholic are welcome to come forward for a blessing by the priest.

Following the Communion Rite the casket or cremated remains will be incensed. As this is done a Commendation hymn is sung. All are encouraged to participate in this prayer for the deceased.

The Song of Sending concludes the liturgy. This is sung as the casket or cremated remains are processed out of the church. Again, everyone is encouraged to participate by singing this hymn.