

**ASCENSION CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
PLANNING THE FUNERAL VIGIL
AND
THE FUNERAL MASS**



**Celebrating the passage through death
to everlasting life.**

"The souls of the just are in the hands of God"
Wisdom 3:1

"From the early history of the Catholic Church, the reverence given to the body of the beloved deceased reflects our hope in the resurrection. We believe that in death, life is not ended but merely changed and our prayers continue for those who walked with us on pilgrimage on earth."

Most Rev. Norbert M Dorsey, C.P.
Late Bishop of Orlando

In him, who rose from the dead,
Our hope of resurrection dawned.
The sadness of death gives way
To the bright promise of immortality.

Lord, for your faithful people life is changed, not ended.
When the body of our earthly dwelling lies in death
We gain an everlasting dwelling place in heaven.

Preface, Funeral Mass

Revised 11/06/2015

Dear Family,

We are sorry that you had a death in the family. We, the Bereavement Team of Ascension hope that we can be of assistance and comfort to you during this time of sadness.

Experience teaches us that active participation in the funeral rites provided by our church can be a huge help to a sorrowing family.

The funeral rites will help you to celebrate the life of your loved one. They will also bolster your faith in our God who is stronger than death.

This booklet has a brief explanation of the rites and symbols of a Catholic funeral. It has a wide selection of scriptures which can be read during a Vigil Service and Funeral Mass. The Planning Sheet will let you know the- many ways that members of your family can be involved in the funeral services. The Bereavement Team will help you with the planning of the services that you choose to have for your loved one.

If we can be of further assistance to you, do not hesitate to call us at the parish office, tel. 254-1595.

In Christ,

Fr. Eamon Tobin
Pastor

Deacon Sergio A. Colon
Ministry Coordinator

The death and burial of Christians have always had a deeply religious and spiritual meaning. Inspired by the description of the burial and resurrection of the Lord in the Gospels, the early Church buried its dead with proper care, reverence and prayer. With faith in the Risen Savior, The Christian community honored the body of the dead and took part in the prayers and Mass offered for a deceased member. **The Mass**, the memorial of Christ's death and resurrection, is the principal celebration of the Christian funeral.

FUNERAL RITES OF THE CHURCH

The church offers us three services at the time of a death in the family, each service builds on the other.

1. VIGIL SERVICE.

At the Vigil Service, usually conducted either in the funeral home or in the parish church on the eve of the Funeral Mass, the faithful keep watch with the family in prayer to the God of mercy and find strength in Christ's presence. The Vigil is a Scripture or Evening Prayer Service. For those wishing to pray the rosary it may be said by the family and friends before or after the Vigil, but not as a replacement of the Vigil. This service is often the first gathering of the faithful friends with the family, and those, who cannot attend the Funeral Mass because of work or some other reasons.

2. FUNERAL MASS.

The tradition of the Church has always been the celebration of the Mass **with the body present**. This is the norm and it is encouraged that all have the Funeral Mass with the body present. Christians respect and honor the body of the dead, which in Baptism became the Temple of the Holy Spirit. The Funeral Mass includes the reception of the body, the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the Final Commendation and Farewell.

3. RITE OF COMMITIAL.

For the final disposition of the body, it is the ancient Christian custom to bury or entomb the bodies of the dead in a cemetery, which means "resting place". The Rite of Committal is the conclusion of the funeral rites and may be celebrated beside the open grave or place of interment. The faithful express the hope that, with all those who have gone before marked with the sign of faith, the deceased awaits the glory of the resurrection and passes into the welcoming company of those who see God face to face.

CREMATION

The Church strongly prefers the body of the deceased be present for its funeral rites since the presence of the body clearly brings to mind the life and death of the person. It is recommended that cremation of the body take place following the Funeral Mass. If cremation takes place immediately after death, the cremated remains are permitted to be brought into church for the celebration of the funeral liturgy, including the Eucharist.

FINAL DISPOSITION OF THE BODY OR CREMATED REMAINS.

Following the Funeral Mass, the earthly remains of the deceased are to be reverently buried or entombed in a mausoleum. The practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air, or on the ground, or keeping cremated remains in the home of a friend or relative or friend of the deceased is **not the reverent** disposition the Church requires.

SYMBOLS

During the Funeral Mass you will notice the presence of the following symbols.

EASTER CANDLE.

The Easter or Paschal candle reminds us of Christ's undying presence among us, of his victory over sin and death and our share in that victory by our initiation into the community of faith. During the funeral liturgy and also during the vigil service, when celebrated in church, the Easter candle is placed before hand near the position the coffin will occupy at the conclusion of the entrance procession.

HOLY WATER.

Blessed water reminds us of the saving waters of baptism. In the rite of reception of the body at the church, it's use calls to mind the deceased's baptism and initiation into the community of faith.

THE PALL.

The Pall, a large white cloth draped over the coffin when it is received in the church, is a reminder of the baptismal garment of the deceased, and is a sign of the Christian dignity of the person. The use of the pall also signifies that all are equal in the eyes of God. At the beginning of the Funeral mass, members of the family are invited to place the Pall over the casket.

INCENSE.

Incense is used during the funeral rites as a sign of honor to the body of the deceased, which through baptism became the temple of the Holy Spirit. It is also used as a sign of the community's prayers for the deceased rising to the throne of God and as a sign of farewell.

FUNERAL PLANNING

The Funeral Mass may not be celebrated in funeral homes or cemetery chapels. Funerals may be celebrated any day except solemnities of obligation, on Holy Thursday and during the Paschal Triduum, and the Sundays of Advent, Lent and the Easter Season. In the Diocese of Orlando it is the pastoral practice to refrain from celebrating funerals on all Sundays. The local parish, in consultation with the Funeral Director and the family, determines the appropriate time for the funeral rites.

The funeral may be scheduled in the morning, afternoon or evening. The funeral rites are to be scheduled at a time which permit as many of the community as possible to be present.

Members or friends of the family are encouraged to be actively involved in the planning and celebration of the funeral rites. The Planning Sheets for the Vigil Service or Funeral Mass will point out the many ways the family members and/or friends can participate in the funeral rites.

Planning of the funeral liturgy takes place during the visit of one of Ascension's Bereavement Ministers to the deceased families home. Usually some appropriate time after death and before the vigil service. However if pastoral and personal considerations allow, the period before death may be an appropriate time to plan the funeral rites with the family and even with the family member who is dying.

With the permission of the celebrant, a family member or friend may speak in remembrance of the deceased at The Vigil Service, after the concluding prayer, or at the Funeral Mass when the prayer after communion is ended.

Words of Remembrance.

Words of Remembrance gives your family an opportunity to share the special qualities and memories of your loved one. At the Vigil Service you can have several people including friends and co-workers share. At the Funeral Mass we ask that only one person share Words of Remembrance for 3 to 5 minutes. If your loved one was a person of faith, please include remarks about this dimension of your loved one's life.

Flowers, as symbols of resurrection and hope, are to be used in moderation. However, they should never be placed on or around the casket during the Funeral Mass. Likewise, the flag should never cover the casket in church.

Personal memorabilia are never placed on the altar nor carried with the gifts of bread and wine when mass is celebrated. A picture of the deceased may be placed in the sanctuary.

BURIAL OF NON-CATHOLIC CHRISTIANS

Catholic burial, including the Funeral Mass, is permitted for a baptized non-Catholic who might reasonably be presumed to desire or prefer Catholic Burial services. Such a decision would be appropriate where the non-Catholic party worshipped regularly at the Catholic Church or identified with the Catholic Church more than any other. It would not be appropriate if the deceased were an active member of a non-Catholic Christian Church, except in the case where the minister of the deceased was unavailable.

Catholics believe in the communion of saints and the resurrection of the dead. We pray for the dead, and we pray to be prepared for death whenever it comes. Like Francis of Assisi, may we befriend death, little by little. Let us meditate on this hymn based on his writings:

*"And you/ most kind and gentle death/
Waiting to hush our final breath
You lead to heaven the child of God,
Where Christ our Lord the way has trod.*



MUSIC

Sacred music for the Mass of Christian Burial should contain text which speaks of resurrection, hope and trust in a loving God. The following selections are taken from Breaking Bread and are listed alphabetically in the back of that hymnal. Songs with Alleluia are not permitted during the Lenten season. Secular and taped music are not permitted during the liturgy.

Songs for Gathering

Alleluia, Alleluia (to the melody Joyful, Joyful We Adore thee)

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus

Be Not Afraid

Blest Are They

Christ The Lord is Risen Today

Christ Be Our Light

Come to the Water

Hosea (Come Back to Me With All Your Heart)

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today

I Am the Bread of Life

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say Come Unto Me and Rest

Lord of All Hopefulness

On Eagles Wings

The Strife is O'er

We Remember How You Loved Us

We Will Rise Again ("We will run and not grow weary .. ")

Lift High the Cross

You Are Mine (Do Not Be Afraid I am with you! have called you each by name)

Responsorial Psalms:

Psalm 16: O Lord You Are the Center of My Life

Psalm 16: Keep Me Safe O God

Psalm 16: You Are All We Have

Psalm 23: Shepherd Me O God

Psalm 25: To You O Lord I Lift My Soul

Psalm 27: The Lord is My Light and My Salvation

Psalm 33: Let Your Mercy Be On Us As We Place Our Trust in You

Psalm 42 As the Deer Longs for Running Streams

Psalm 91 Be With Me Lord When I am In Trouble

Psalm 91: On Eagles Wings

Psalm 103: The Lord is Kind and Merciful

Psalm 131: In You O Lord I Have Found My Peace

Psalm 139: You Are Near

Presentation of Gifts

It is preferable that instrumental music be played as the gifts are brought forward.

However, if you desire music you may choose from the above list.

Communion Music

Eye Has Not Seen (ears have not heard what God has ready for those who love him)

Be Not Afraid

Center of My Life

Come to the Water

Gift of Finest Wheat

I Am the Bread of Life

I Have Loved You With An Everlasting Love

One Bread One Body

On Eagles Wings

Shepherd Me O God

Song of the Body of Christ (We Come to know our rising from the dead)

Taste and See the Goodness of the Lord

When It's All Been Said and Done (there is just one thing that matters ..)

Quietly, Peacefully

Music for Sending Forth

Amazing Grace

Here I am, Lord

Holy God We Praise Your Name

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

Now Thank We All Our God

Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

Prayer of St. Francis

The Church's one Foundation

To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King

We Walk by Faith

Sent Forth By God's Blessings

TEXTS OF SACRED SCRIPTURE

In every celebration for the dead, the Church attaches great importance to the reading of the word of God. The readings proclaim the paschal mystery i.e. the dying and rising of Jesus. They 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 design for a world in which suffering and death relinquish their hold on all whom God called his own.

CHOICE OF SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR VIGIL AND/OR FUNERAL MASS

(Usually the First Reading is from the Old Testament. However, if you wish, the First Reading could also be one of the New Testament Epistles offered on pages 20-25.)



OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

1) **A reading from the Book of Wisdom (3: 1-6,9)**

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 people 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. 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 care is with his elect.

The Word of the Lord

2) A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah. (25:6. 7-9)

On this mountain the Lord of hosts
will provide for all peoples
a feast of rich foods.

On this mountain he will destroy
the veil that covers all peoples,
The web that is woven over all nations;
he will destroy death forever.

The Lord 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.

3) A reading from the prophet Isaiah. (43:1-7)

But now, thus, says the Lord,
who created you, O Jacob, and formed you, O Israel:

Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name: you are mine.

When you pass through the water, I will be with you;
in the rivers you shall not drown.

When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned;
the flames shall not consume you.

For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, your savior.

Because you are precious in my eyes and glorious, and because I love you.

I give people in return for you and peoples in exchange for your life.

Fear not, for I am with you;
Bring back my sons from afar,
and my daughters from the ends of the earth.
Everyone who is named is mine,
whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.

The word of the Lord.

4) A reading from Ecclesiastes. (3:1-12)

There is an appointed time for everything,
and a time for every affair 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.

What advantage have workers from their toil? I have
considered the task which God has appointed for people to be busied about, He has made
everything appropriate to time, and has put the timeless into their hearts, without anyone ever
discovering, from beginning to end, the work which God has done.

The word of the Lord.

5) A reading from the book of Lamentations. (3:17-18,22-26)

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 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.

6) A reading from the book of Proverbs 31:10-31

When one finds a worthy wife, her value is far beyond pearls. Her husband, entrusting his heart to her, has an unfailing prize.

She brings him good, and not evil all the days of her life.

She obtains wool and flax and makes cloth with skillful hands.

Like merchant ships, she secures her provisions from afar.

She rises while it is still night, and distributes food to her household.

She picks out a field to purchase; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.

She is girt about with strength, and sturdy are her arms.

She enjoys the success of her dealings; at night her lamp is undimmed.

She puts her hands to the distaff, and her fingers ply the spindle.

She reaches out her hands to the poor, and extends her arms to the needy.
She fears not the snow for her household; all her charges are doubly clothed.
She makes her own coverlets; fine linen and purple are her clothing.
Her husband is prominent at the city gates as he sits with the elders of the land.
She makes garments and sells them, and stocks the merchants with belts.
She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs at the days to come.
She opens her mouth in wisdom, and on her tongue is kindly counsel.
She watches the conduct of her household, and eats not her food in idleness.
Her children rise up and praise her; her husband, too, extols her:
"Many are the women of proven worth, but you have excelled them all."
Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting; the woman who fears the Lord
is to be praised.
Give her a reward of her labors, and let her works praise her at the city gates.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALMS

***IF THE PSALM IS NOT SUNG, ONE OF THE FOLLOWING PSALMS WILL BE
READ BY THE LECTOR***

1) Psalm 23

The response to the psalm is: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me.
To revive my drooping spirit. **Response**

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort. **Response**

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. **Response**

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever. **Response**

2) **Psalm 42**

**The response to the psalm is: My soul is thirsting for the living God:
when shall I see him face to face?**

Like the deer that yearns
for running streams
so my soul is yearning
for you, my God. **Response**

My soul is thirsting for God,
the God of my life;
when can I enter and see
the face of God? **Response**

O send forth your light and your truth;
let these be my guide.

Let them bring me to your holy mountain
to the place where you dwell. **Response**

And I will come to the altar of God,
the God of my joy.
My redeemer, I will thank you on the harp,
O God, my God. **Response**

Why are you cast down, my soul,
why groan within me?
Hope in God; I will praise him still,
my Savior and my God. **Response**

3) **Psalm 27**

The response to the psalm is: The Lord is my light and my salvation.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life; before whom should I shrink? **Response**

There is one thing I ask of the Lord, for this I long, to live in the house of the Lord, all the days of
my life, to savor the sweetness of the Lord to behold his temple. **Response**

O Lord, hear my voice when I call; have mercy and answer. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
hide not your face. **Response**

I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living. Hope in him and take heart. Hope
in the Lord! **Response**

4) **Psalm 122**

The response to the psalm is:

**I rejoiced when I heard them say:
let us go to the house of the lord.**

I rejoiced because they said to me, "We will go up to the house of the Lord.
And now we have set foot within your gates, O Jerusalem. **Response**

Jerusalem, built as a city with compact unity.
To it the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord. **Response**

According to the decree for Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the Lord.
In it are set up judgment seats,
seats for the house of David. **Response**

5) Psalm 103

The response to the psalm is: The lord is kind and merciful.

The Lord is compassion and love,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults. **Response**

As a father has compassion on his sons,
the Lord has pity on those who fear him;
for he knows of what we are made,
he remembers that we are dust. **Response**

As for man, his days are like grass;
he flowers like the flower of the field;
the wind sweeps over him and he is gone
and his place never sees him again. **Response**

But the love of the Lord is everlasting
upon those who hold him in fear;
his justice reaches out to children's children
When they keep his covenant in truth. **Response**

6) Psalm 91

The response to the psalm is: Be with me lord, when I am in trouble,

You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,
say to the Lord, "My refuge and fortress,
my God in whom I trust." **Response**

No evil shall befall you,
nor shall affliction come near your tent,
for to his angels he has given command about you,
that they guard you in all your ways. **Response**

Upon their hands they shall bear you up,
lest you dash your foot against a stone.
You shall tread upon the asp and the viper;
you shall trample down the lion and the dragon. **Response**

Because he clings to me, I will deliver him;
I will set him on high because he acknowledges my name.
He shall call upon me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in distress
I will deliver him and glorify him. **Response**

NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLE READINGS

1) A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians. (5:1,6-10)

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.

2) A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans. (6:3-4, 8-9)

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. 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.

3) A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans. (8:31-35, 37-39)

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 overwhelming 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.

4) A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans. (11:33-35)

Oh, the depths of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!
How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways!
"For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has been his counselor?
Who has given him anything so as to deserve return?"
For from God and through him and for him are all things,
To God be glory forever, Amen,

The word of the Lord.

5) A reading from the First letter of Paul to the Corinthians. (15:51-57)

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 that which is corruptible clothes itself with incorruptibility and that 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.

6) A reading from St. Paul's 2nd Letter to Timothy. (2 Tim:4:6-9)

For I am already being poured out like a libation, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have competed well; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.

From now on the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the just judge, will award me on that day, and not only to me, but to all who have longed for his appearance.

The word of the Lord

7) A reading from the First letter of Paul to the Corinthians. (1 Cor. 13:4-13)

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, love is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth.

It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. If there are prophecies, they will be brought to nothing. For we know partially and we prophesy partially, but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. When I was a child, I used to talk as a child, think as a child, reason as a child: when I became an adult, I put aside childish things. At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face.

At present I know partially; then I shall know fully as I am fully known.

So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

The Word of the Lord

8) A reading from St. Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians. (1 Thess. 4: 13-18)

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

9) A reading from the Book of Revelations. (Rev.21:1-7,14:13)

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. 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."

I 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.

10) A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans. (5:5-11)

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 the 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.

11) A reading from the second letter of Paul to the Corinthians. (2 Cor 5:1,6-10)

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.

GOSPELS READINGS

1) A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew. (5: 1-12)

When he saw the crowds, Jesus went up the mountain and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn,

for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek

for they will inherit the land.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful,

for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart,

for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,

for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you falsely because of me. Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven."

The Gospel of the Lord

2) A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew. (25:31-41)

Jesus said to his disciples:

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the king will say to those on his right,

"Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me

Then the righteous will answer him and say,

"Lord. when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?"

And the king will say to them in reply,

"Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least of my brothers or sisters, you did for me".

The gospel of the Lord

3) A reading from the holy gospel according to John. (11 :21-27)

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would never have died. Even now, I am sure that God will give you whatever you ask of him." "Your brother will rise again," Jesus assured her. "I know he will rise again," Martha replied, "in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her

"I am the resurrection and the life:
whoever believes in me,
though he shall die, will come
to life; and whoever is alive and
believes in me will never die.

Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she replied.

"I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God: he who is to come into the world."

The gospel of the Lord.

4) A reading from the holy gospel according to John. (14: 1-6)

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be. Where I am going you know the way."

Thomas said to him, "**Master, we do not know where you are going; how can we know the way?**" Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

The gospel of the Lord.

5) A reading from the holy gospel according to John. (6:51-58)

Jesus told the crowd:

"I myself am the living bread come down from heaven.
If anyone eats this bread he shall live forever;
the bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world."

At this the Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can he give us his flesh to eat?"

Thereupon Jesus said to them:

"Let me solemnly assure you, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

The one who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has life eternal, and I will raise him up on the last day.

The gospel of the Lord.

6) A reading from the holy gospel according to John. (16:20-23)

Amen, Amen, I say to you, you will weep and mourn, while the world rejoices; you will grieve, but your grief will become joy.

When a woman is in labor, she is in anguish because her hour has arrived; but when she has given birth to a child, she no longer remembers the pain because of her joy that a child has been born into the world.

So you are also now in anguish. But I will see you again, and your hearts will **6)** rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.

On that day you will not question me about anything.

Amen, Amen, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you.

The gospel of the Lord.

7) A reading from the gospel according to John. (12:23-26)

Jesus told his disciples:

"The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit, Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life.

Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me."

The gospel of the Lord.

8) A reading from the holy gospel according to John. (Jn 6:37-40)

Jesus said to the crowd:

"Everything that the Father gives me will come to me. and I will not reject anyone who comes to me, because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. And this is the will of the one who sent **me, that I** should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day."

The Gospel of the Lord

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR YOUNG PERSONS

1) A reading from the book of Wisdom. (4:7-15)

The good person, though he or she dies early, will be at rest. For old age is not honored because of the length of time, or measured by the number of years; but understanding merits old age for anyone, and a blameless life is as good as old age.

There were some who pleased God and were loved by him, and while they were living among sinners they were taken up.

They were taken up so that evil might not change their understanding or deceit fool their souls.

Being perfected in a short time, they fulfilled long years; for their souls were pleasing to the Lord, therefore he took them quickly from the midst of wickedness.

But the people saw and did not understand, nor take it to heart,
Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones and his care is with his elect.

The word of the Lord.

2) A reading from the first letter of St. John (3:1-2)

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 Lord.

3) A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians. (1 Thess.4: 13-18)

My friends, we want you to understand how it will be for those followers who have already died. Then you won't grieve over them and be like people who don't have any hope. We believe that Jesus died and was raised to life. We also believe that when God brings Jesus back again, he will bring with him all who had faith in Jesus before they died.

Encourage each other with these words.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL READINGS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

1) A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew. (Mt. 11:25-30)

At that time Jesus said in reply, "I give praise to you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for although you have hidden these things from the wise and the learned you have revealed them to the childlike. Yes, Father, such has been your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him.

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.

The gospel of the Lord.

2) A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark. (10: 13-16)

People were bringing children to Jesus that he might touch them. but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this he became indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it."

Then he embraced them and blessed them, placing his hands on them.

The gospel of the Lord.

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

After the homily several Prayers of the Faithful are read. You may wish to make up some of your own or use some of the following sample prayers. Choose about five of the following prayers.

1. In baptism, _____ received the light of Christ. Scatter the darkness now and lead him/her over the waters of death. We pray to the Lord.

2. Our brother/sister _____ was nourished at the table of the Savior. Welcome him/her into the halls of the heavenly banquet. We pray to the Lord.

3. For our sorrowing family, that God may comfort and console us and heal the wound and loss caused by _____ death. We pray to the Lord.

4. For all who work with the sick, dying and grieving, that God may richly bless their ministry. We pray to the Lord.

5. For all of us gathered here in faith, that we may always have the grace to turn the painful experiences of life into opportunities of growth. We pray to the Lord.

6. For _____, who in baptism was given the pledge of eternal life, that he/she may now be admitted to the company of the saints. We pray to the Lord.

7. For our deceased relatives and friends and for all who have helped us, that they may have the reward of their goodness. We pray to the Lord.

8. For those who have fallen asleep in the hope of rising again, that they may see God face to face. We pray to the Lord.

9. For the family and friends of our brother/sister _____ that they may be consoled in their grief by the Lord, who wept at the death of his friend Lazarus. We pray to the Lord

If you want grandchildren to read some of the intercessions, the following are offered as samples. The prayers can be adjusted to suit the occasion.

1. In baptism, Grandma (Grandpa) received the light of Christ. Scatter the darkness now and lead her/him over the waters of death. **We pray to the Lord.**

2. Grandma (Grandpa) was often nourished at the table of the Savior. Welcome her into the halls of the heavenly banquet. **We pray to the Lord.**

3. For Grandma (Grandpa) that you, God, might be with him in a special way in the months ahead, especially during those times when he misses Grandma. **We pray to the Lord.**

4. For all who are sad because they have recently lost a loved one. **We pray to the Lord.**

5. For all who work with the sick, dying and the grieving, that God may richly bless their ministry. **We pray to the Lord.**

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD AND FOR THOSE WHO MOURN

You may wish to pray this prayer for your loved one who has died.

Lord, in our grief we turn to you. Are you not the God of love who opens your ears to all? Listen to our prayers for your faithful servant _____ whom you have called out of this world: lead him/her to your kingdom of light and peace and count him/her among the saints in Christ our Lord. Amen.

OR

Into your hands, O Lord, we humbly entrust our brother, sister, mother, father, friend, In this life you embraced him/her with your tender love; deliver him/her now from every evil and bid him/her enter eternal rest.

The old order has passed away: welcome him/her then into paradise, where there will be no sorrow, no weeping or pain, but the fullness of peace and joy, with your Son and the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO MOURN

Lord God, you are attentive to the voice of our pleading. Let us find in your Son, comfort in our sadness, certainty in our doubt, and courage to live through this hour. Make our faith strong, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

OR

Father of mercies and God of all consolation, you pursue us with untiring love and dispel the shadow of death with the bright dawn of life. Comfort our family in our loss and sorrow. Be our refuge and our strength, O Lord, and lift us from the depths of grief into the peace and light of your presence.

Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ by dying has destroyed our death and by rising restores our life. Enable us therefore to press on toward him, so that after *our* earthly course is run, he may reunite us with those we love, when every tear will be wiped away. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Order of Christian Funerals)