

### ***Liturgical Matters***

- ***Altar Servers:*** preference is generally given to the parish ministry team. Members of the family may offer their services inasmuch as they have received the necessary formation.
- ***Ministers of the Word:*** this ministry is usually reserved to those who have received the necessary formation.
- ***Ministers of Communion:*** this ministry is usually reserved to the mandated ministers in the parish.
- ***Music and Hymns*** help us express our faith in the resurrection of Christ. Selections will take into consideration the pastoral context and the place where the funeral is being celebrated.
- ***Flowers, Insignia and Other Objects:*** flowers should not cause any obstruction. Insignia and other objects will be placed on a table near the casket or the ashes.

### ***Services offered by the Parish***

The parish offers all its available resources to prepare the funeral liturgy including

- accompanying the family in mourning,
- meeting the family to prepare the funeral liturgy, and
- celebrating the vigil at the funeral home.

### ***Interment***

The Church requests that the body or ashes of its deceased member be buried in a grave in a cemetery. Ashes can also be entombed in a mausoleum or a columbarium.

The ashes should not be separated nor kept in a relative's home or in any other private location. They should not be scattered in the sea nor on the ground.

This brochure summarizes the main points contained in the *Diocesan Pastoral Guide for Christian Funerals* available on the diocesan website.

*Cette brochure est également disponible en français.*

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# Diocesan Pastoral Guidelines for Christian Funerals



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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.

The celebration of the Christian funeral brings hope and consolation to the living. While proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and witnessing to Christian hope in the resurrection, the funeral rites also recall, to all who take part in them, God's mercy and judgment and meet the human need to turn always to God in times of crisis.

Christians celebrate the funeral rites to offer worship, praise, and thanksgiving to God, the author of life and hope of the just.

### ***Where the funeral will be celebrated***

Sacraments and other important moments of our faith are celebrated in the parish church. Traditionally, the church is where the Christian community is gathered.

When a Christian dies, the Church offers consolation and hope to the bereaved and to the community. This celebration usually takes place in the Church.

For different reasons, the deceased or a family member may request a Catholic celebration outside the church, namely at the funeral home or at another designated venue.

It should however be noted that the Eucharistic celebration can only be held in the church while a Liturgy of the Word can be celebrated either in the church or at the funeral home.

### ***Funerals at the church***

- **with a mass:** priest presider
- **outside mass:** priest presider or lay person mandated by the bishop

***Funerals outside the church*** : a priest presider or a mandated lay person

### ***Other details***

Funeral celebrations are not held in the church nor at the funeral home from Saturday noon nor on Sundays and Holy days of obligation (Christmas and New Year's).

In Canada, the funeral liturgy may be celebrated without mass on Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

If, for whatever reason, the remains or the ashes have been buried before the celebration of the funeral, a funeral mass can be celebrated in the church at some other time.

### ***Initial contacts***

Once a loved one has passed away, the bereaved family contacts:

- the parish where the funeral will be celebrated and
- the funeral home for the other arrangements.

### ***Visitation***

Visitation usually takes place at the funeral home.

Visitation will not be allowed in the nave of the church unless the moderator, members of the Pastoral Ministry Team and the Ordinary (the bishop) decide differently.

### ***The words of remembrance***

The words of remembrance, sometimes referred to as the eulogy, are not part of the funeral mass and should preferably be done at the vigil or the reception following the funeral.

The Ritual allows for words of remembrance during a liturgy outside mass.