

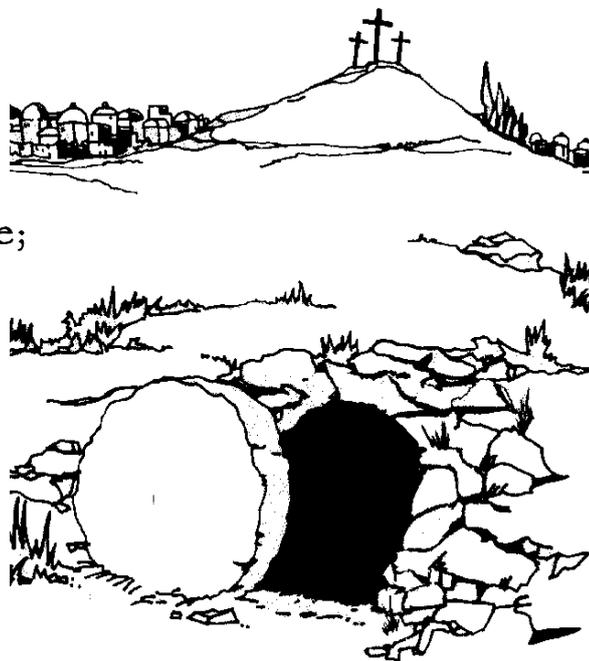
Preparing for the  
Funeral Mass



“Do not let your hearts be troubled,  
trust in God still and trust in me.

There are many rooms in my Father’s house;  
If there were not I should have told you,  
and after I have gone  
and prepared you a place,  
I shall return to take you with me;  
So that where I am you may be too.”

*John 14: 1-6*



Nothing wounds the human heart like the death of a loved one. After death, for those who are left behind, there is heartbreak and grief, loss and sorrow. As well as this you have to arrange the Funeral of your loved one.

A Funeral is a time of sorrow and mourning. For Christians it is also a time to hold firm in faith and hope, for Jesus Christ has won a great victory over death and made it possible for us to pass through to new and eternal life.

In the Catholic Funeral Liturgy, we pray that our deceased brother or sister be admitted into paradise. We assist them with our prayers in commending their soul to the Lord.

We pray that you will also get strength from family and friends and our community who gather to support you through what is a very difficult time.

This booklet will help you in arranging the Funeral Mass of your loved one.

Inside there are readings, options and details to consider.

You are not alone; we are here to assist you in preparing for the Funeral, along with your Undertaker.

Please know that you can contact us at anytime.

The Clergy and Parish Team

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## Music

You will have to decide if you would like music at the Funeral Mass. It is also fine not to have music. It is the responsibility of the family to organise the music.

**Your Undertaker will put you in contact with an experienced Church Musician** who will choose or help you in choosing the Sacred Music for the Funeral Mass. This should be done as soon as possible.

## Hymns

There are normally 5 hymns chosen for the Mass – **Entrance, Offertory, Communion (x2)** and the **Recessional**. The **Responsorial Psalm** and **Gospel Acclamation** may also be sung.

The Funeral Mass is a Sacred Ceremony and therefore non-liturgical 'songs' are not appropriate. Church music fittingly enhances the Funeral Liturgy providing a quiet, prayerful and calming atmosphere focused on the Christian message.

## Readings

**(1, or 2 people)**

We encourage family members and friends to take part in the **Liturgy of the Word** by reading the **First Reading** and the **Second Reading**.

The **Psalm**, if there is no music or if not sung by the Choir or Cantor, is also read in between the First and Second Readings.

You can make your selection of Readings from those provided in this booklet.

The reader(s) are encouraged to get familiar with the text to become comfortable with pronunciation and to set a suitable pace.

Readers should announce the Reading e.g. 'A reading from the...' then pause, read the Scripture text and pause again before ending with 'The word of the Lord.'

We are not able to include other readings, such as poetry, at Mass.

## Prayer of the Faithful

**(1, 2, 3 or 6 people)**

One, two, three or up to six people may read the Prayer of the Faithful. The priest will invite them to come forward at the appropriate time and he will introduce the Prayer. The six prayers on page 11 then follow, from each reader in their turn.

They remain on the Sanctuary Area until the priest concludes the Prayers of the Faithful and then they return to their seats.

<b>PLEASE NOTE:</b>	<b>All texts for the Readings and Prayers you have chosen will be there for you. You don't need to bring any text up with you on the day of the Funeral.</b>
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## Offertory Procession

**(2, 3, or 4 people)**

Two, three or four family members or friends bring the gifts of bread and wine for the Mass to the priest. The priest will invite them to come forward at the appropriate time.

# Options for the First Reading

## Option 1

*Wisdom 3:1-9*

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God, no torment shall ever touch them. In the eyes of the unwise, they did appear to die, their going looked like a disaster, their leaving us, like annihilation; but they are in peace.

If they experienced punishment as men see it, their hope was rich with immortality; slight was their affliction, great will their blessing be. God has put them to the test and proved them worthy to be with him; he has tested them like gold in a furnace, and accepted them as a holocaust.

When the time comes for his visitation they will shine out; as sparks run through the stubble, so will they. They shall judge nations, rule over peoples, and the Lord will be their king forever.

They who trust in him will understand the truth; those who are faithful will live with him in love; for grace and mercy await those he has chosen.

The word of the Lord.

## Option 2

*Wisdom 4: 7-15*

A reading from the book of Wisdom.

The virtuous man, though he died before his time, will find rest. Length of days is not what makes age honourable, nor number of years the true measure of life; understanding, this is man's grey hairs, untarnished life, this is ripe old age.

He has sought to please God, so God has loved him; as he was living among sinners, he has been taken up. He has been carried off so that evil may not warp his understanding or treachery seduce his soul; for the fascination of evil throws good things into the shade, and the whirlwind of desire corrupts a simple heart.

Coming to perfection in so short a while, he achieved long life; his soul being pleasing to the Lord, he has taken him quickly from the wickedness around him. Yet people look on, uncomprehending; it does not enter their heads that grace and mercy await the chosen of the Lord, and protection, his holy ones.

The word of the Lord.

### **Option 3**

*Isaiah 25: 6-9*

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will prepare for all peoples a banquet of rich food. On this mountain he will remove the mourning veil covering all peoples, and the shroud enwrapping all nations, he will destroy Death forever.

The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek; he will take away his people's shame everywhere on earth, for the Lord has said so.

That day, it will be said: See, this is our God in whom we hoped.

We exult and we rejoice that he has saved us.

The word of the Lord.

### **Option 4**

*Ecclesiastes 3:1-8*

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes.

There is a season for everything,  
a time for every occupation under heaven:

A time for giving birth, a time for dying;  
a time for planting, a time for uprooting what has been planted.

A time for killing, a time for healing;  
a time for knocking down, a time for building.

A time for tears, a time for laughter;  
a time for mourning, a time for dancing.

A time for throwing stones away, a time for gathering them;  
a time for embracing, a time to refrain from embracing.

A time for searching, a time for losing;  
a time for keeping, a time for discarding.

A time for tearing, a time for sewing;  
a time for keeping silent, a time for speaking.

A time for loving, a time for hating;  
a time for war, a time for peace.

The word of the Lord.

## Option 5

*Proverbs 31:10-13,19-20,30-31*

A reading from the book of the Proverbs.

Let kindness and loyalty never leave you;  
wear them around your neck, write them on your heart.

Trust in God, put no faith in your own perception;  
in every course you take have God in your mind.

Happy the person who discovers such wisdom,  
because wisdom is beyond the price of pearls,  
nothing you could wish for is her equal.

Her ways are delightful ways, her paths all lead to contentment.

She is a tree of life for those who hold her fast,  
those who cling to her live happy lives.

The word of the Lord.

## Option 6

*2 Maccabees 12:43-46*

A reading from the second book of Maccabees.

The noble Judas Maccabeus took up a collection, man by man, to the amount of two thousand drachmas of silver, and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering. In doing this he acted very well and honourably, taking account of the resurrection.

For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen asleep would rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead.

But if he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought.

Therefore he made atonement for the dead, so that they might be delivered from their sin.

The word of the Lord.

## Psalm Option (if not sung)

### Psalm

### Psalm 22 (23)

*If the Choir/Cantors are not singing the Psalm, then the following Psalm is read between the First and Second Readings:*

Reader: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

Reader: 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.

He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name.

**All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

Reader: You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell forever and ever.

**All: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.**

# Options for the Second Reading

## Option 1

*1 Corinthians 15:20-23*

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of all who have fallen asleep. Death came through one man and in the same way the resurrection of the dead has come through one man.

Just as all men die in Adam, so all men will be brought to life in Christ; but all of them in their proper order: Christ as the first-fruits and then, after the coming of Christ, those who belong to him.

The word of the Lord.

## Option 2

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians.

Do not weep for those who have died, or be filled with sadness like those who have nothing to hope for.

We believe that Jesus died and rose to new life, and that the same thing will happen to all who believe in him.

Take comfort in knowing that everyone who died in Christ shall rise to new life and be with him forever.

The word of the Lord.

## Option 3

*2 Timothy 4:6-8*

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to Timothy.

As for me, my life is already being poured away as a libation, and the time has come for me to depart. I have fought the good fight to the end; I have run the race to the finish;

I have kept the faith; all there is to come for me now is the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the upright judge, will give to me on that Day; and not only to me but to all those who have longed for his appearing.

The word of the Lord.

## **Option 4**

*1 John 3:1-2*

A reading from the first letter of St John.

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called God's children; and that is what we are. Because the world refused to acknowledge him, therefore it does not acknowledge us.

My dear people, we are already the children of God but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is.

The word of the Lord.

## **Option 5**

*Philippians 3:20-21*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians.

For us, our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the saviour we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. He will do that by the same power with which he can subdue the whole universe.

The word of the Lord.

## **Option 6**

*Romans 5:5-11*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

Hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us. We were still helpless when at his appointed moment Christ died for sinful men.

It is not easy to die even for a good man - though of course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die - but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. Having died to make us righteous, is it likely that he would now fail to save us from God's anger?

When we were reconciled, surely we may count on being saved by the life of his Son? Not merely because we have been reconciled but because we are filled with joyful trust in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have already gained our reconciliation.

The word of the Lord.

## **Option 7**

*Romans 14:7-12*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others, if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life; it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living.

We shall all have to stand before the judgement seat of God; as scripture says: By my life – it is the Lord who speaks – every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall praise God.

It is to God, therefore, that each of us must give an account of himself.

The word of the Lord.

## **Option 8**

*2 Corinthians 5:1-3*

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

We know that when the tent that we live in on earth is folded up, there is a house built by God for us, an everlasting home not made by human hands, in the heavens.

We are always full of confidence, then, when we remember that to live in the body means to be exiled from the Lord, going as we do by faith and not by sight — we are full of confidence, I say, and actually want to be exiled from the body and make our home with the Lord.

Whether we are living in the body or exiled from it, we are intent on pleasing him. For all the truth about us will be brought out in the law court of Christ, and each of us will get what he deserves for the things he did in the body, good or bad.

The word of the Lord.

## **Option 9**

*Revelation 14:13*

A reading from the book of Revelation.

Then I heard a voice from heaven say to me, 'Write down: Blessed are those who die in the Lord! Blessed indeed, the Spirit says; now they can rest for ever after their work, since their good deeds go with them.'

The word of the Lord.

## Option 10

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians.

We want you to be quite certain, brothers, about those who have died, to make sure that you do not grieve about them, like the other people who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that it will be the same for those who have died in Jesus: God will bring them with him.

We can tell you this from the Lord's own teaching, that any of us who are left alive to the Lord's coming will not have any advantage over those who have died.

At the trumpet of God, the voice of the archangel will call out the command and the Lord himself will come down from heaven; those who have died in Christ will be the first to rise, and then those of us who are still alive will be taken up in the clouds, together with them, to meet the Lord in the air.

So we shall stay with the Lord forever.

With such thoughts as these you should comfort one another.

The word of the Lord.

## Option 11

*Romans 6:3-9*

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the father's glory, we too might live a new life.

If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection.

We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from slavery of sin. When a man dies, of course, he has finished with sin.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more.

The word of the Lord.

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## Prayer of the Faithful

**Priest:** Let us pray to God in heaven, who through Christ gives us the hope that our mortal bodies will become like his in glory:

**Reader(s):**

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1. In Baptism we are given the promise of eternal life: may \_\_\_\_\_ be raised up to share the life of God in heaven. (*pause*)... Lord hear us...

2. For the family and friends of \_\_\_\_\_: that they may find strength and consolation in the hope we have through Christ's Resurrection from the dead. (*pause*)... Lord, hear us.

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3. For medical and nursing professionals (and in particular those who have cared for \_\_\_\_\_): Lord, guide their caring hearts and gentle hands. (*pause*)... Lord hear us...

4. Lord our God, look on those who live without hope and do not know you; bring them to believe in the Resurrection and the life of the world to come. (*pause*)... Lord hear us.

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5. O God, Creator of life and the gifts you have given each of us, help us to use them to build respect for each other and our world. (*pause*)... Lord hear us.

6. Eternal Father, bring \_\_\_\_\_, all our deceased relatives and friends, and all the faithful departed into the light of your presence. (*pause*)... Lord hear us.

**Priest:** O God, you made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Hear our prayers and grant that our hearts may be set on our eternal home where we will all be reunited through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Family Prayers

### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

### Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among women,  
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners,  
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

### Glory be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.

### Salve Regina

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy,  
our life, our sweetness, and our hope.  
To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve.  
To you we send up our sighs,  
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.  
Turn, then, most gracious advocate,  
your eyes of mercy towards us, and after this, our exile,  
show unto us the fruit of your womb, Jesus.  
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary! Amen.

### Prayer for Eternal Rest

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
May the souls of the faithful departed,  
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



