



Remarks of Remembrance ("Eulogy") Policy  
for Funerals  
The Diocese of Bridgeport

## Remarks of Remembrance (“Eulogies”)

The *Order of Christian Funerals* rarely uses the word “eulogy,” and then only to describe what the homily should *not* be (see paragraph 141). While a “eulogy” is not a requirement of the Catholic funeral ritual, many bereaved families nonetheless have the expectation that there will be an opportunity during the funeral Mass for someone to offer some sort of “eulogy.” An opportunity for such remarks is in fact provided in OCF 170 (“A member or a friend of the family may speak in remembrance of the deceased before the final commendation begins”) and should ordinarily be allowed.

In order to assure that they are in harmony with the sacred character of the Mass, the Church setting and the solemnity of the occasion, any “Remarks of Remembrance” given at funerals in the Diocese of Bridgeport are to be guided by the following parameters:

- Since the “Prayer after Communion” concludes the Communion Rite, “Remarks of Remembrance” (or any other announcements) must take place *after* the “Prayer after Communion” and before the Final Commendation.
- In a Catholic funeral, the “Remarks of Remembrance” should be seen as a way to give praise and thanks to God for the life of the deceased. In other words, the remarks should place emphasis on how God has been seen acting in the life and in the death of the deceased or how God has blessed us and the world through the life and faithful example of the deceased. Note that this focus on God’s action is what differentiates these Remarks from a “eulogy.”
- Since they are not strictly a “eulogy,” the Remarks should not simply be a listing of the accomplishments of the deceased. Even more so, care should be taken that the remarks do not become a recitation of stories about the speaker himself or herself.
- Ordinarily, there is to be only one person who offers Remarks of Remembrance at the Funeral Mass.
- As an option, if there are several people who would ask or be asked to offer such remarks, they could contribute to compose one set of Remarks together. As a possibility, all could stand near the pulpit while one or more of them reads the Remarks in the name of the group.
- As another alternative, a time could be set aside during the Vigil (“wake”) or at the after-funeral gathering for more people to share remarks individually.
- In exceptional cases (e.g., an untimely death or tragic circumstances), the pastor may permit more than one person to speak in remembrance of the deceased.
- The person chosen to offer the Remarks should be able to maintain composure while speaking. It becomes very uncomfortable for all present when grief overcomes the speaker.

- Keeping always in mind the sacred nature of the Mass and the church setting and the solemnity of the occasion, the person who offers the remarks is not permitted to share stories, use language or perform any action which is in poor taste, disrespectful of the deceased or embarrassing to anyone present for the funeral. Any questions regarding propriety should be directed to the parish priest or his delegate beforehand.
- Remarks of Remembrance are to be WRITTEN out beforehand and not given “off-the-cuff.” A copy of the remarks should be shared with the clergy-celebrant or delegate for review before the funeral. Ideally, the copy is to be ready by the time of the wake service on the day before the funeral Mass is to be celebrated.
- In all cases, the Remarks of Remembrance must not appear to be excessively long or more important than the Mass itself. The remarks should be NO LONGER THAN 5 to 7 MINUTES in duration. This is usually the equivalent of one single-spaced typewritten page.