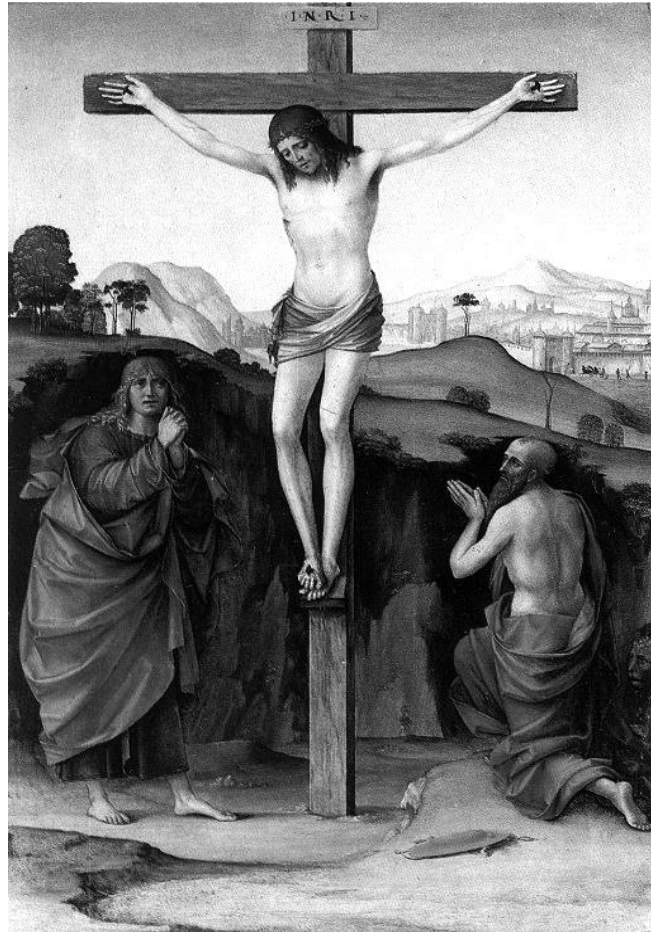


Eternal Rest Grant Them O Lord!



A Guide to Funerals at Holy Trinity Church

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- Please accept our condolences in your time of grief. If we can be of particular assistance in the grieving process, please do not hesitate to speak to Father or one of the staff members.
- In general, all arrangements are handled through the Funeral Director of your choice.
- It is preferable for the body or the ashes of the deceased to be present in Church during the Funeral Mass.
- The clergy are unable to perform wake services in cases where there is no body or ashes present to pray over.
- Guest clergy are always welcome. In the case of Catholic clergy, they are welcome to vest and to serve on the altar. If the family is close to a particular Catholic Priest, he is also welcome to be the principle celebrant of the Mass. Protestant clergy are also welcome, however, their role is limited to saying a few words at the very end of the Mass. They are not permitted to do readings or to preach.

READINGS:

- The family is invited to select the reading(s) for the Funeral Mass. The clergy will guide you in this area and provide the booklet "Through Death to Life" which will explain your options. If the family is not comfortable with this, the clergy will gladly make selections for you.
- The Priest will ordinarily select the Gospel reading. The family may select the first (and/or) second reading(s).
- Other Scriptural readings, not found in "Through Death to Life," may be permitted on a case-to-case basis, if judged appropriate by the Priest.
- Non-Scriptural readings and/or secular texts are never permitted as readings at Mass.
- The Responsorial Psalm is usually sung and chosen by the soloist. In cases where a soloist is not desired, the family may select and read this as well.
- Those doing readings must ordinarily be Catholics. In all cases, the readers must be acquainted with public speaking and emotionally prepared for this role.
- The Homily is always given by a Priest or Deacon.

EULOGIES:

- According to the Liturgical Law of the Church and the decree of Our Bishop, eulogies, properly so-called, are not an accepted part of the Catholic Funeral Mass. Therefore, they may not be given at the Mass. They are most appropriately given at the Funeral Home (before or after the wake service), at the graveside (after the priest's prayers), or at the reception following the Funeral Services.
- As a pastoral consideration, it can be permitted for one person to speak very briefly at the end of Mass in remembrance of the deceased. In this case, these "words of remembrance" must comply with the Bishop's Liturgical Policy and must be made available to Father ahead of time for his review and possible editing. Please see the Bishop's Policy on the Holy Trinity Website at <http://www.htrccsherman.org/documents/2015/1/Eulogies.pdf>
- The speaker offering the words of remembrance must be emotionally prepared for this task and acquainted with public speaking.
- Any "words of remembrance" that go on too long, become overly emotional, or become inappropriate will not be allowed to continue.

FLOWERS / ALTAR DECORATIONS:

- Flowers are arranged through the florist of your choice. They must be in good taste and not overwhelming in size or in number.
- Flowers can be placed: in front of the pulpit, in front of the altar candle sticks, or in the center in front of the altar. No arrangement should be taller than the altar or interfere with movement around the altar.
- Flowers are considered a donation to the Church in memory of the deceased. As such, it is ordinarily expected that they will remain in the church after the Mass.
- Decorations of any other kind are usually not appropriate. If something else is desired, please consult the Priest first. Balloons and the like are never appropriate and cannot be used in the church or vestibule/entryway.

MUSIC FOR THE MASS:

- Music for the Mass is determined in consultation with the soloist.
- Guest soloists / pianists are welcome, but our own staff must still be paid a "bench fee."
- Music for the Mass must be appropriate and religious in nature. Secular songs, show tunes, secular ethnic songs, and the like are never appropriate and are not permitted.
- The Responsorial Psalm is usually selected by the soloist and sung by her.
- Within these regulations, the family's requests for particular hymns will be honored as much as possible and guidance will be provided for those who are unsure of what they may want.

COSTS AND FEES:

- The organist and/or soloist each have their own fees and will expect separate payment on the day of the Funeral Mass.
- There is a "bench fee" if the family wishes to engage an outside organist and/or soloist.
- There is no fee for the services of the clergy or for use of the church. However, donations are always appreciated.

CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING HOLY COMMUNION:

- We welcome to our services those not of the Catholic Faith. Catholics believe that Holy Communion is the true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus (and not just a symbol or reminder) as well as a sign of unity (of hierarchy, theology, and faith) among the Catholic Faithful. Therefore, because of the differing beliefs in Christianity regarding the Eucharist and the Church, we are not able to admit non-Catholics to receive Holy Communion. We ask that non-Catholics please respect our law in this regard and remain in their pews during the distribution of Holy Communion while praying for the restoration of full unity among us.
- We ask that the family communicate this to any non-Catholic family members or guests who are expected to attend.
- Those non-Catholics belonging to the Eastern Orthodox Church, Polish National Catholic Church, and Assyrian Church of the East, are permitted under Canon Law to receive Holy Communion. However, we ask that members of these Churches respect their own particular law in this matter.
- Those Catholics who are not conscious of unconfessed grave sins, who are living a life in harmony with the moral teachings of the Catholic Church, and who strive to live a life of charity toward God and neighbor are permitted to receive Holy Communion as at Sunday Mass. Those wishing to, or needing to, receive Confession are encouraged to make an appointment with a Priest several days before the Funeral Mass.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ASHES/CREMAINS:

- The Catholic Church does permit cremation of the deceased on the condition that cremation is not chosen out of hatred for our earthly bodies or the desire to destroy the body.
- It is expected that, if cremation is chosen, the cremains (ashes) will be present for all services: wake, Funeral Mass, and graveside service.
- Cremains must always be buried -- in their entirety -- in a grave or a cemetery niche. This must be done in a timely manner and as soon as possible after the Funeral Mass.
- Out of respect for the body of the deceased, the Catholic Church **forbids** ashes to be kept in the home or in the possession of any individual. Similarly, the Church also **forbids** the scattering of the ashes or the dividing up of the ashes for any reason.
- Burial at sea is permitted only under certain rare circumstances and only with the permission of the local bishop. Even in this case, ashes cannot be scattered.