

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The death of a loved one begins a time of great loss, loneliness, pain, sadness, confusion and searching. But it is also a time when the core of all that we believe as Catholics – that new life comes through death – is remembered and celebrated.

The Christian funeral offers worship, praise and thanksgiving to God, the creator of all life. It commends the deceased person to God's merciful love and affirms the bond between the living and the dead in the communion of saints. It brings hope and consolation to the bereaved and celebrates Christ's Passover and our participation in it through Christian initiation.

Those of us who minister within the Church recognize the deep sorrow of the bereaved. We offer this booklet as a helpful guide and companion as you make the necessary, but difficult, decisions that the death, or impending death, of your loved one requires. It is also a great reference for those who wish to decide in advance about the many details of their own funeral or the funeral of loved ones.

The information contained inside this booklet comes from many sources. It is designed to ease this time of loss and transition. I also urge you to meet with your parish bereavement ministers for further counsel. The spiritual and physical support of your parish community can serve to strengthen your reliance upon God and our Catholic traditions as you persevere in this most difficult time.

At this time, and always, know that you are in my thoughts and prayers.

With every good wish, I remain,

Sincerely in the Lord,

✠ Most Reverend John J. Myers, J.C.D., D.D.  
Archbishop of Newark

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Pastoral Letter – “Whether in Life or in Death, We are the Lord’s” (*Romans 14:7*)  
Most Reverend John J. Myers, J.C.D., D.D.,  
*Archbishop of Newark*

## ***I. Bereavement Segment***

- Hospice Care, End of Life Issues, and Advance Directives . . . . . 19
- Coping with the death of a loved one  
Janet McCormack, M.A. . . . . 23
- Eternal Life- The Continuing Journey . . 31
- Reflections
  - Make peace with dying loved ones, be there for the bereaved  
Stephen Steele. . . . . 31
  - When parents face the imminent loss of a child  
Julie Asher. . . . . 31
  - I know how you feel  
Janet McCormack, M.A. . . . . 33
  - Death at a distance  
Elizabeth Wells . . . . . 33
  - The wake and the vigil service: a time to share the reality of life and death  
Dianne L. Josephson . . . . . 35
  - The Power of Candles in Prayer  
Rev. Msgr. William B. Naedele. . 36
  - Mourning process extends well beyond day of funeral  
Mary Carty . . . . . 36

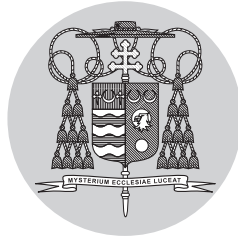
- Depression and grieving  
Frederic Flach, M.D. . . . . 37
- Ministry Resources at a Time of Loss . . . 39

## ***II. Liturgical Segment***

- Sacrament of the Sick . . . . . 43
- Preparing a Catholic Cemetery Arrangement
- Understanding Catholic Funerals  
Rev. Thomas B. Iwanowski . . . . . 45
  - The Vigil Service . . . . . 46
  - The Church Service . . . . . 46
  - The Committal Service . . . . . 48
  - Cremation . . . . . 50
- Eulogy Policy, Archdiocese of Newark . 51
- Scripture Readings for Funerals . . . . . 53
- Suggested Music for Funerals . . . . . 68

## ***III. Practical Segment***

- Practical Preparation. . . . . 71
  - Details to Address . . . . . 71
  - Your Will . . . . . 72
  - Social Security . . . . . 72
  - Benefits for Veterans . . . . . 73
  - Prepaid Funerals . . . . . 76
- Forms. . . . . 78
- Acknowledgements. . . . . 83



Most Reverend John J. Myers, J.C.D., D.D.

Archbishop of Newark

## Pastoral Letter on Death and Dying

*"Whether in Life or in Death, We are the Lord's"*

*Romans 14: 7*



### Introduction

Many of us have experienced the sadness and suffering of standing close by as the life of a loved one fades and comes near the end of the time ordained for this world. My father, my sisters and brothers and I knew this ordeal when we had to make a variety of decisions as my mother's life faded and she underwent a series of medical emergencies. The occasions and the discussions were difficult, even wrenching. Fortunately, the family is close and our relationships have remained good. Finally, in God's time, He took her to himself. We have been deeply comforted by the faith which we shared with her, and which she nurtured in us.

In this spirit, I wish to share some reflections with those in the Archdiocese of Newark who may now or sometime in the future seek comfort in Jesus Christ's victory over sin and over death.

The words from St. Paul's letter to the Romans, in the title, direct us toward the very heart of Christianity. Jesus is sent by the Father to reveal the Mystery of God as a community of persons in a relationship of loving communion. As the revelation of the Father, Jesus, through His humanity, shines light on what it means to be a person created in the image and likeness of God, what it means to be truly human. By His death and resurrection, Jesus redeemed us and made us His own, giving us the means necessary to experience here and now what we will live fully when we have passed from death into eternal life. The Gospel celebrates the truth that "Whether in life or in death, we are the Lord's."

For the Christian people, Jesus remains "the glory of man fully alive." Christ alone completely reveals what it means to express the love from which and for which we were created. Through the Church, God continues to reach out to us in the person of His Son. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, God enables us to understand just what it means to live as men and women created in the divine image. The invitation of Christ is a call for all men and women to encounter the Divine







questions of human existence to the One who provides us the way to understand and to address the most difficult circumstances of life.

The revelation of God proclaimed by Jesus was expressed most perfectly and definitively through His own willingness to suffer and to die. Jesus is, therefore, precisely the one to whom we should turn when we find ourselves confronted by the reality of death in our own lives or in the lives of those we love. He didn't simply talk about suffering and death; He endured them and He prevailed over them. Jesus teaches us not only what it means that "in life and in death, we are the Lord's." He also enables us to live the truth of the words St. Paul has spoken.



## hat We Must Ask Ourselves

Earlier this year, our nation, indeed the world, watched with stunned fascination the unfolding of death in the life of one American family. The death of Terri Schiavo saw unparalleled media scrutiny. Although we may not know all the facts, we do know that many questions remain, including, for some, confusion about Church teaching in these matters. At the center of our confusion lies a set of important questions:

- What is the nature and meaning of personhood?
- What is our moral responsibility to provide food and water to those who are unable to care for themselves?
- What is the role of competent medical authority in assessing the condition of those who seem incapable of human response?
- What are the obligations of a democratic society to safeguard the lives of those most vulnerable and in need of care?

In order for all of us in the Church to be able to make informed and morally licit decisions when our own health is seriously diminished or death is imminent, we need to review the Church's teachings on these important questions.

Every day in our country, feeding tubes are removed or refused without garnering even local media attention. What set the case of Terri Schiavo apart, what indeed made this situation so unusually tragic, was the struggle between two groups. One group considered Terri as a person who existed with them in a loving relationship; the other group considered that her personhood had ended long ago. One group felt that the loving thing to do was to continue caring for Terri; the other group seemed convinced that it was an act of love to move her from life with God here to life with God in heaven.





In the midst of the overwhelming media coverage of Terri Schiavo's dying and of her death, many of us perhaps stopped seeing her as a person but rather as an idea or as a cause, or in a worst-case scenario, as a political tool. In the midst of this confusion, we cannot allow ourselves to forget that beneath all the arguments was a living human being.

We all need to keep in mind that Terri Schiavo was and is a person, a sister in our faith. Though much that transpired in the process of her death was disordered, she is with the Lord and she has become, in a sense, a symbol of the confusion in America over the tension between individual autonomy and communal responsibility. Certainly, this experience underscores the need of making one's wishes known in writing and in a form which is recognized in particular jurisdictions.



## **Death is Our Reunion with Christ**

We need to remind ourselves that death is not an evil that should be feared. In the words of the ancient preface of the funeral liturgy, "Lord, for your faithful people, life is changed, not ended; and when the body of our earthly dwelling lies in death, we gain an everlasting place in heaven." Death is not only an end to "earthly" existence; it also is the passageway to eternal life. Unnecessarily prolonging death, clinging at all costs to this life, can be an attempt to reject what our faith boldly proclaims, "Death has no more power over Christ!"

It is a virtuous practice to pray for a happy death, and many Christians have implored St. Joseph to obtain for them what each priest and religious prays for every night, "a peaceful death." While we should not hasten our death, we must not fear it either. St. Benedict reminds us to pray for death each day, as if it were to come tomorrow; for we know neither the time nor the hour of its approach. Our hope is not to live our mortal lives without end, but to live for all eternity with God.

The mystery that shrouds death causes fear for many. Faith nonetheless strengthens what is lacking in our human frailty and gives us the courage to embrace what we cannot change. Faith also recognizes the necessity to be fearless in the face of death. "Where I am going you know the way," Jesus tells His apostles. We must live with confidence that Christ is preparing a place for us and will indeed return to unite us with Himself.

While we live as God's children now, we long for the moment when we shall become like Him and see Him face to face. The way we respond to the suffering and death of those whom we love, the way in which we embrace our own mortality, speaks volumes about the way in which we have accepted that Jesus Christ is Lord of the living and the dead. The inability to accept that suffering is redemptive, or the inclination to immediately end the pain of those who are suffering, reveals that we have not yet accepted the Way for us to live the fullness of our humanity. Likewise, the refusal to accept that death comes to all, shown by attempts to maintain biological vitality at all costs, also reveals a failure to place our hopes in Christ. Christians always must embrace life here and now with their hearts and minds set on a world that will never end, a world in which every tear will be wiped away.





## **forming End-of-Life Decisions**

Our attitude toward death must be an extension of our attitude toward life. Living now for God will determine how we will face the moment when we pass from this world to the next. In order to help the faithful put in place appropriate and clear legal and medical directives, the Church has articulated a set of principles derived from the most fundamental teachings on the dignity of the human person and the inherent dignity of each human life. Just as every individual human life is unique and unrepeatable, from conception until natural death, so too the physical suffering and medical condition of each person is unique and cannot be generalized. The following ethical principles of the Church respect this aspect of our individuality as children of God.

They are meant to serve as a helpful guide to end-of-life decisions, allowing us to embrace suffering and death in freedom, and with peace of mind.



## **Our Obligation for the Proportionate Means of Preserving Life**

Life is sacred, for it is a gift from God. As recipients of this precious gift, we are always morally obligated to use ordinary means for maintaining and insuring physical health. "Proportionate means" describes those medical remedies and procedures that in the judgment of the patient and competent medical authority, in light of the Christian understanding of the dignity of human persons, offer a reasonable hope of benefit. Many of us employ this principle without much thought as we consider to what extent we wish to experience the side-effects of over-the-counter remedies for such common ailments as the flu, a cold, a sore throat, a headache or muscle pain. At times we forgo a remedy in favor of letting the illness "take its course" because we do not wish to be hindered by the side-effects of the remedy being considered.

This common-sense approach to illness, one with which we are all familiar, is to be applied to those illnesses that are more severe and life threatening. Our reasonable hope in the benefit of a proposed treatment should not reflect an attitude of preserving life "at all costs".



## **The Presumption in Favor of Providing Nutrition and Hydration**

As members of the human family, every man or woman, regardless of age or socio-economic condition, requires a set of fundamental human goods, among which are those required for maintaining life: food, air and water. Without these primary goods, other basic human needs become inconsequential.

To insure that the human dignity of every person is respected, there must always be a presumption in favor of food and hydration, even for those patients who require assistance for the delivery of those goods. When specific medical conditions indicate that a medical treatment may place excessive





burdens on the patient without a sufficient benefit, the decision not to undertake such a treatment can be morally licit. When such a decision is made, continued care must be extended, including offering food and water to the extent to which the patient is able to receive them.

The presumption for food and hydration must also be carefully weighed, however, in consideration of both perceived benefit and excessive burden. This is especially true when a feeding tube has already been inserted. Depending upon the assessment in light of proper ethical principles and in consultation with proper medical professionals regarding the condition of the patient and the capability of human response, it may be morally licit not to undertake artificial nutrition and hydration, providing that the intention is not to bring about the death of the patient and that basic care is continued. For instance, if the food and hydration in fact harms the patient, then capping or removing the feeding tube would be a prudential judgment to relieve unnecessary pain and suffering. The patient himself or herself or the designated surrogate are the proper persons to make any required decisions.



## **Forgoing Extraordinary or Disproportionate Means of Preserving Life**

Often when it is time to make a decision to forgo extraordinary means of preserving life, families and loved ones are overwhelmed by the situation at hand. They may be pressed for decisions on whether or not to harvest organs, whether or not to remove life support or assisted respiration, or whether or not to accept a diagnosis of “brain death.” In such moments, when there is little time to work through the facts and the emotions of the situation, it is important to realize that the Church’s teaching is not “life at all costs.” A discussion of reasonable hope and excessive burden is not a denial of love and care for the person who is suffering.

Whether or not a proposed medical procedure is “extraordinary” or “disproportionate” can only be determined with reference to a specific medical condition of one given individual. Not all cancer patients, not all non-responsive individuals, not all persons facing imminent death can be assessed under a predetermined protocol. An informed judgment can only be made by the patient or legal surrogate in close concert with medical professionals in the light of Church teaching.

The intensity of emotion can inhibit our ability to assess either the hope of benefit of the proposed treatment or any potential burden that treatment might inflict on the patient and on those responsible for providing the care—the family, doctors, nurses and aides who are tied in love and charity to the patient. It is essential to establish a loving human relationship between the medical caregivers and the patient in order to insure that the dignity of that person is appropriately respected. Always, provisions should be made that the person receive the sacraments of the Church, including the Apostolic Blessing reserved for those near death. The family and friends should have the benefit of the ministry of the Church, and representatives of the Church should encourage them with prayer and by sharing our faith in Jesus and the salvation He offers.





## **The Importance of Making a Free and Informed Judgment**

In order to assure a patient or a chosen legal surrogate that the decisions made regarding the end of life are licit and expressive of faith in Jesus Christ, the Church encourages all the faithful to seek guidance from medical professionals and from pastoral caregivers.

An informed decision should include competent medical authority. We must welcome and embrace all that has been learned by those who practice the medical arts as a vocation of human relationship. The development of this relationship will help remind all parties involved that the decisions to be made are always moral, as well as scientific.

No one should feel alone or incapable of deciding what best respects the individual dignity of the person suffering. When fully informed by the teaching of the Church, each Christian's prudential judgment regarding end-of-life issues is an exercise of that same freedom we experience in our sacramental union with Christ. It is the same freedom we feel having celebrated the sacrament of Penance, the same freedom we feel receiving the Eucharist, and the same freedom we feel in the loving company of those whom Christ has gathered around him in friendship.



## **On the Nature and Meaning of Human Personhood**

Those whose lives are dedicated to the medical arts can also help us understand the Church's teaching on the nature and meaning of being a person. The advances in our knowledge of the workings of the mind and body as a compact unity affirm that which the Church has always held: being a person is a gift of having been created in the image and likeness of God. While all created reality serves God's purpose, only human beings are able through their physiology and spirituality to participate with God in the work of creation. Likewise, the medical arts are a supreme example of our ability to work with nature as we journey toward our completeness in physical health and through a "long stretch of days." Medicine, when rightly practiced, seeks to insure that all men and women can experience their humanity with vitality and fullness.

While all living creatures reveal the mystery of God in a way unique to each, only human beings reveal the mystery of God in a way not determined or limited by physiology alone. Only human beings can act in such a way that their life in the body conforms to their hearts, their minds and their wills. This is why a human being is rightly called a person, for human beings are more than the aggregate of physiological integrity. They have a spiritual life as well, and are capable of thought and decision, even though in the embryo or fetus these abilities are present potentially.

When assessing the mental state or physical condition of a developed human being, competent medical authorities seek to determine the extent to which everything physically required for an individual to express him or herself, beyond merely bodily response, is functioning appropriately. Our medical professionals try to ascertain whether or not, in some appreciable measure, the individual is capable of communicating, "I am present." While this diagnostic communication is taking place, we should all encourage our doctors to be open and honest with us as patients, family, and friends.





Participating in a genuine relationship with our doctors requires that we trust their professional judgment, especially when the situation is deemed life-threatening.

When facing end-of-life situations, we should never forget that personhood and human life are inextricably bound together. The Catholic Church teaches that the dignity of personhood is an innate dimension of being human. Personhood and human life can never be separated, for they are a unity willed by God. The Church looks to the advances made in the medical arts to understand better those situations in which the unity willed by God is no longer viable.

Each human person, therefore, is always more than the sum total of biological integrity. While it is true that human beings can be physically and mentally disabled by imperfections of the mind or body, it is never true that the physical or mental diminishment of a human being means that an individual is no longer a person. Personhood must never be thought of solely as a judgment imposed by others. Being a person is the ultimate gift of having been created by God in such a way that one can choose to share God's life. To make such choices, we must first have a degree of mental and physical health that enables us to do so.



## On the Question of Euthanasia

Many Catholics have shared the experience of tending to their loved ones in their last days and know the complexity of the emotions and questions which can arise. Their love for the Creator and His will offers sure guidance and comfort in protecting life appropriately, even when the situation is beyond our understanding.

We must be careful as a nation that the laws we enact to promote and protect our prudential judgments over end-of-life issues do not intentionally or unintentionally allow for the direct termination of a human life. What a person experiences in embracing suffering and death informs and instructs others about the responsibility we have to one another in love. Human life will only be cherished and sacred to the extent that the commitment we make to respect, care for, and love one another is unwavering.



## he Sacrament of Presence

For the Catholic faithful, the gift of each life is essentially a "sacrament" of presence. His teaching emanates from the fact of God becoming man in the person of Jesus. The abiding sign of the Church's belief in the dignity of the human person is the belief in the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. By Jesus' words and the power of the Holy Spirit, the Eucharist is the means by which Jesus' real presence remains with us until the end of time. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the goods of creation are used to permeate the whole of human history with the Presence of divinity. What appears as simple bread and wine communicates a Presence that transcends our human senses.





In the same way, human life is able to communicate a Presence that transcends what we sensibly perceive. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, individual human lives are incorporated into the life of Christ in such a way that they become the means by which His Presence is encountered and experienced in the world. Just as we cannot reduce the elements of the Eucharist only to that which we are capable of sensing, we must likewise never reduce a human life to what is merely biological.

Every human life bears the dignity of the Creator. No human life is ever considered to be the mere sum of biological and physiological processes. These natural processes ordered toward and directed by the brain, allow a person the sense of being present. Because of advances in medical technology, the precise time of death can be difficult to ascertain. Both ethical and medical criteria should be applied, often in dialogue with those with special training. Again, the patient or proper surrogate should make any decisions, fully informed of the teaching of the Church.

For the Christian people, baptism empowers the original dignity of personhood to become an active and innovative sign of God's love as a present reality. That is why the Church speaks of the "quality" of a human life as something greater than one's emotions or reflexive responses. The quality of each human life lies in the fact of its presence as a living, existing reality that remains an incarnate sign of the God who created all things.

Therefore, special and loving care must be extended to each human being, especially those no longer experiencing life as the compact unity that God intended. For them and for those who have died, we have a singular responsibility to insure that our treatment of them is worthy of the dignity they possess as having been created in God's image and likeness. Whether in life or in death, every one of us matters.

Veneration for and care for the body does not end with death. Since the body is integral to the human person, Christian believers have, from the earliest days, accorded the body special respect. It is preferable that the body be buried with due solemnity and with prayers for the deceased. Together, after all, we look forward to its resurrection and to our more complete sharing in the Life of Christ.



## **Conclusion: Keeping Vigil with the Dying**

To stand with others and keep vigil while they suffer and die is the greatest gift of love a human being can experience. It also provides the greatest opportunity to learn. Those who suffer and those preparing to die have much to teach the healthy and the living about the mystery of our humanity and the dignity that is ours through our relationship with God. Every human life is valuable. Those who keep vigil with the dying are familiar with the overwhelming beauty of this truth.

We witnessed this recently through the unfolding death of John Paul II. While the world watched the controversy surrounding the last days of Terri Schiavo, this great man offered his life as a testimony to what the Church believes and holds sacred. His choices about how he would die embodied the way he chose to live: of and for the God who had called him to the priesthood and eventually to stand as Peter. In life and in death, John Paul II made it clear that he lived for God. Through his own slow demise, he became an icon of human dignity and a sacrament of the inherent worth of each individual person.







Christ demonstrated this for us on the Cross. He allowed the experience of His physical condition to become an opportunity for others to learn what only those who are dying are capable of teaching. Like the crowd of people who stood and kept vigil, we are challenged to find our place near "the Cross" of other people's suffering and death.

The grace of keeping vigil touched the lives of the men who were present only out of duty and obligation. It was the job of the soldiers to stand and keep vigil. What Jesus revealed through His suffering and death changed the lives of many of those men; they experienced something beyond what they were used to or what they expected. It was because of the way that Jesus embraced the dignity of His personhood through the reality of His tortured and diminishing humanity that one of the men was forced to say, "Truly this was the Son of God." At the moment of the Cross, humanity and divinity were perfectly one in a glorious way.

Others were moved to be present for varying reasons, some out of genuine human compassion. They were affected in ways they could not have anticipated. Their willingness to keep vigil opened their eyes to the revelation of Divinity that was only possible through the diminished physical body and limited human responsiveness of Jesus. That afternoon they walked away with a deeper insight into the dignity of their own fragile and vulnerable humanity because they recognized in the suffering and death of Jesus the real presence of God.

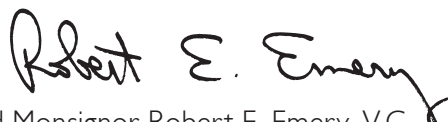
Those who had felt such a presence throughout Jesus' public ministry were also there that day. Foremost among them was John, the beloved friend who had left everything to come and see the one who just might be the messiah. No one can imagine what John felt as he kept vigil with Jesus dying on the Cross. We can say with utmost certainty that the moment of the Cross defined everything John thought about Jesus and every experience they shared. For Pope John Paul II, one of the greatest gifts he received from Christ was that many kept vigil with him while he died.

Next to John at the foot of the Cross was Mary, the Mother of Jesus. She experienced the grace of keeping vigil with the dying in a way unlike any other. What she learned through the suffering and death of her only Son was a gift entrusted to the Church at its inception. It remains a gift preserved by the Church to this day. Mary's insights about suffering and death, her solidarity with those whose lives are physically and mentally diminishing, are a great consolation to all of us who will one day pass from this life to the next. What Mary is able to teach us can help us in the decisions we make about how we will approach the end of our lives. Let us ask her to assist us now and at the moment of our deaths in order that we may see with greater clarity how to live both our life and our death as she did: for the Lord.

Given at my Chancery on September 8, 2000  
The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



✠ Most Reverend John J. Myers  
Archbishop of Newark

Attest:   
Reverend Monsignor Robert E. Emery, V.G.  
Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia  
Chancellor





# HOSPICE CARE, END-OF-LIFE WISHES, AND ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

## ***What is hospice?***

The term hospice dates back to medieval times when it was a place of rest for weary or ill-travelers. Today, hospice is any place where comfort is provided to those who need care on their end-of-life journey.

Hospice and Palliative Care consists of quality and compassionate end-of-life care. A team approach provides medical care, pain management, emotional and spiritual support tailored to meet the needs and wishes of people facing a life-limiting illness.

Palliative care extends the principles of hospice care to a broader population that could benefit from receiving this type of care earlier in the disease process. No specific therapy is excluded from consideration. Palliative care, ideally, would segue into hospice care as the illness progresses.

## ***What is Palliative care?***

Palliative care, also called comfort care, is primarily directed at providing relief to a terminally-ill person through symptom management and pain management. The goal is not to cure, but to provide comfort and maintain the highest possible quality of life for as long as life remains. Well-rounded palliative care programs also address mental health and spiritual needs. The focus is not on death, but on compassionate specialized care for the living. Palliative care is well-suited to an interdisciplinary team model that provides support for the whole person and those who are sharing the person's journey in love.

## ***How does hospice care work and what services are provided?***

Hospice care is a family-centered approach that includes a primary caregiver, physician, nurses, home health aides, social workers, counselors, bereavement services and trained volunteers. Team members make regular visits to assess the patient and family needs to provide the

necessary care and services. Hospice staff is on-call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Hospice also provides medical equipment, supplies and medications related to the terminal diagnosis.

## ***When is an individual ready for hospice care?***

An individual is ready for hospice when all active treatment is completed and an individual is facing the challenges of a life-limiting illness.

## ***What services does hospice provide?***

Hospice provides medical services, home health aide services, social workers, spiritual support, volunteer services, and bereavement support.

## ***Are hospice services only available at home?***

No, hospice care can be provided in nursing homes, assisted living facilities and in-patient hospice facilities.

## ***How does hospice philosophy differ from standard medical practice?***

Hospice is about an individual's right to choose how they wish to be cared for in the final phase of their life. Hospice believes that all persons have the right to live in dignity and free from pain until the natural event of death occurs.

## ***What are the criteria for admission?***

- Patient and family understanding and agreement with the hospice concept of "palliative" versus "curative" care.
- The patient's diagnosis being consistent with a life-limiting illness.
- The attending physician's recommends the patient for hospice and agrees to work with our hospice team.

***Where do I go for a referral?***

Your physician, a community agency, friend, or relative may refer you or your loved one to hospice.

***Can I keep my own doctor?***

You may keep your own physician who will work closely with the hospice team.

***How is hospice care paid?***

Hospice care is paid by Medicare, Medicaid and some commercial insurances and HMOs, according to their benefits. Some services are not covered, depending on the insurance plan.

***Does hospice provide any help to the family after the patient dies?***

Many hospices continue to provide services to the family after the patient dies including grief and bereavement counseling and outreach from staff and volunteers.

***What role do volunteers play in hospice care?***

Volunteers are required to complete a training course that includes the history and philosophy of hospice, death and dying, grief and bereavement, medical aspects, including diagnosis and signs and symptoms of the dying process. They participate in communication and listening sessions as well as anticipatory grief and family dynamics. They learn how to function as a member of the interdisciplinary team and support the patient and family on their difficult journey. Some volunteer areas include but are not limited to, patient/family visitors, drivers, office workers, bereavement/spiritual counseling, bilingual volunteers and fund raising.

***End-of-Life Wishes and Advance Directives***

Dying is never an easy topic to reflect on, but we all know that we will face death one day. In knowing this, it is so important to ensure that our own wishes for our end-of-life care are known to our families, friends and physicians. There are many factors to consider including medical care, advance directives and of course the memories we leave our loved ones. In preparing an Advance Directive we can be comforted in the knowledge that our wishes for our end-of-life care are granted.

***How do I communicate my end-of-life care wishes?***

The most effective way to ensure that your end-of-life wishes are granted is through an Advance Directive. An Advance Directive is a document that allows you to name the person that can make healthcare decisions and follow through with your wishes for medical treatment in the event that you are unable to make decisions for yourself in the future. An important reason to have an Advance Directive is to clearly state your acceptance or refusal of any procedure, especially life-sustaining treatment.

***What should I keep in mind when preparing my Advance Directive?***

Most people think about their values concerning their end-of-life care, particularly pain management, life-sustaining means, family and religious beliefs. It is wise to consult with your pastor concerning the Church's teaching. Also remember to ask yourself if you have clearly stated your instructions and wishes for treatments.

***Is there one type of Advance Directive?***

No, there are three types of Advance Directives: Proxy Directive, Instructive Directive and Combined Directive.

**Proxy Directive** – also known as a “Durable Power of Attorney” enables you to name a health care representative, usually a family member or friend, to make health care decisions for you when you cannot.

**Instructive Directive** – also known as a “Living Will” is where you state the types of medical treatments you will accept or refuse in certain situations.

**Combined Directive** – is a combination of the above mentioned directives that allows you to name a healthcare representative and state your treatment wishes.

***Who should have a copy of my Advance Directive?***

- Health Care Proxy
- Your Physician
- Close family and friends
- Nursing/assisted living/hospice facility

## **Can I revoke my Advance Directive if I change my mind?**

Yes, you can revoke your Advance Directive at any time regardless of your physical or mental condition. You may revoke your Advance Directive in writing, orally or any type of action that indicates you no longer want it in effect.

For more detailed information on Advance Directives and End-of-Life care, please visit: [www.caringinfo.org](http://www.caringinfo.org)

## **Personal Reflections**

- Do I have any fears about dying?
- What are my fears/feelings on pain management?
- Do I want to be kept alive on machines?
- How do I feel about the inability to control my mental and bodily functions?
- How do I feel about feeding tubes if I am unable to swallow?
- What type of medical treatment do I want?
- Do I want to give my family the authority to make medical decisions for me when I am unable to do so?
- Where do I want to die? (At home with hospice, the hospital, a nursing home, assisted living)
- Do I want to donate my organs?  
(Refer to Organ Donation)
- What are my funeral wishes?
- Does my family know and understand my wishes?
- Is an Advance Directive the right option for me?
- How will I be remembered?

**Information on hospice care can be obtained at [www.njhospice.org](http://www.njhospice.org) or at (908) 233-0060.**

## **Organ Donation**

The subject of donating healthy organs after someone has died is sometimes misunderstood in terms of Church teaching. The high level of respect for the integrity of the body of a deceased loved one that Catholics traditionally

express might lead to a perception that such an action is not permissible. However, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* deals with this subject in a clear and compassionate manner, citing that such a practice is, indeed, in keeping with respect for the person and the goal of moral scientific research and treatment of others.

*2296: Organ transplants are in conformity with the moral law if the physical and psychological dangers and risks to the donor are proportionate to the good sought for the recipient. Organ donation after death is a noble and meritorious act and is to be encouraged as an expression of generous solidarity. It is not morally acceptable if the donor or his proxy has not given explicit consent.*

Ultimately, the decision to “extend a life” through organ donation is a personal one and should be made prayerfully and in discussion with other family members.

## **Body Donation**

It is permissible for Catholics to donate their entire body to medical science. There does need to be some reasonable assurance that the remains of the body will be disposed of in an appropriately reverent manner.

Although a funeral Mass may not be celebrated without the remains of the deceased, the family should celebrate a memorial Mass for the donor. The rite of Committal may conclude the prayers for the donor and family.

## **Amputated Extremities**

Amputated extremities are to be buried in an appropriate way. Contact the local funeral director for further information.

## **Care for Miscarriages**

All life is sacred and the remains of fetuses or stillborns are to be given reverent Christian burial, preferably in a Catholic cemetery.

The Chaplain’s Office at Catholic hospitals works closely with families in preparing such burials by contacting a funeral director when necessary as well as the parish of the family involved. When these burials are not handled directly through Catholic hospitals, families should make arrangements with a local funeral director.



# COPING WITH THE DEATH OF YOUR LOVED ONE

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Death is as much a part of life as birth. It is a universal human experience, yet the grief that results from the death of a loved one - and how we process it - is uniquely individual. There are many personal, cultural and situational factors that determine the grief reaction. You will read about them in the following section along with some general information about mourning written in response to statements commonly expressed by grievers. Keep in mind that contrary to what friends, family and society may tell us, there are no definite patterns to grief nor is there a specific timetable for its resolution. We are hopeful this information will affirm and support you at this most difficult time in your life.

## ***Why do I feel this way?***

You are *grieving*. Grief is the normal, natural, necessary response to the death of a loved one. It is as simple - and daunting - as that. As human beings, we love and bond with one another. When those bonds are broken by death, our minds, bodies and spirits react to the loss. It is therefore quite natural for us to cry out in pain. When a death occurs, we start on a grief journey that will require some of the hardest work we have ever had to do. We call this work *mourning*, and we will do it in phases.

## ***I can't believe he's gone.***

Shock. Denial. Numbness. Disbelief. These are the hallmarks of the first phase of grief that help us to cope with the death a bit at a time. These "protective devices" keep us from grasping the full reality of the death and experiencing the overwhelming emotions of the loss all at once. This period of mourning provides the opportunity to "teach" ourselves that death has really happened, little by little. In this

phase, we may still expect our loved one to call or arrive home at a certain time of day, or we may think we have caught a glimpse of him on a busy street. While it is true that our loved one is very strongly and squarely in the forefront of our consciousness in this denial phase, we still have not suffered the full psychological impact of the loss. In other words, we can't yet fully *believe* the death is final.

## ***My feelings are overwhelming. Sometimes I feel as if I'm going "crazy."***

Because mourning is the most unique, yet difficult, work we will ever have to do, we will often experience a level of emotional pain unfamiliar to us after a loved one has died. We may feel as if our lives - and emotions - are spinning out of control. And, because we have never had to deal with feelings of such enormous intensity, we can be confused, frightened and overwhelmed when they surface. It is in this phase of grief that we are faced with intense feelings of guilt, anger, loneliness, helplessness, sadness, fear, anxiety and panic - among many others - and few of us have had practice confronting and engaging such emotions - until now. Having to find our way through this phase of intense emotional reaction that is a great departure from any previous life experience is frightening and disconcerting.

## ***She died six months ago and I feel worse now than I did in the beginning.***

After a number of months, the "anesthesia" of the denial phase wears off and we are left to face the full force of our emotions. There is no longer a protective mask in place to dull the knowledge of this irrevocable loss. Having 'learned' through day-to-day living that the loss is permanent, we are flooded with deeper,

more intense feelings - just when we thought we were making progress! It is no wonder, then, that mourners become frightened and discouraged and feel they have taken a step backward in this phase. The numbness of the first phase has now surrendered to the unwelcome realities of death and all the pain that accompanies it. It is also important to note that grief is a curvilinear process. It is natural to temporarily revisit earlier phases in the process.

***He was very ill for a long time  
and I knew he was going to die  
but it still hurts.***

When we see our loved one falling to the effects of a debilitating or terminal illness, or if he or she is simply aging and not able to function as they had in the past, we often enter into what is termed anticipatory grief. In other words, we begin to mourn the loss of the person prior to their actual death. Physical and mental illness and the consequences of aging can steal away our loved ones as we knew them, and we will mourn the weakening of their physical, emotional and spiritual dimensions. When the major roles and responsibilities once held by that person have to be relinquished to others who are more able, or if a once-active and vital lifestyle is curtailed, significant loss occurs for patient, family and friends alike. And, the resulting grief - for all - will not be far behind. While anticipatory grief does allow the opportunity for mourners to do some of their grief work ahead of time, it does not exempt them from processing the phases nor feeling the full impact of the death once it finally occurs.

***I seem to be reacting differently to the  
death than the others in my family.***

Families can have certain personal and cultural expectations about the 'right' way to grieve, and judgments are often made about the length or appropriateness of a member's mourning. The family system is comprised of a complex

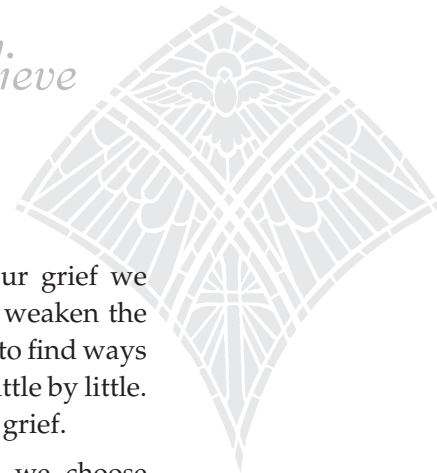
set of unique human relationships, some close and bonded, others, perhaps, not intensely so. Because every human relationship in a family system is unique, and because every member is an individual, every grief reaction in that family will be unique. Simply put, no two family members will grieve the same person in the same way or within the same time frame. It is just not possible to do so. As each family collectively and individually grieves its lost member, survivors will find themselves renegotiating their roles within the family system and with each other. When this necessary, but difficult, work of renegotiating is done, the family will come forth in a new, reinvented form.

***My husband seems less affected  
by the death.***

Most differences in the way men and women grieve are the result of cultural, ethnic, familial, societal and marital expectations in addition to personal style. Although there are very general responses that can distinguish 'male' from 'female' grief, it is important to note that grief in itself is not gender specific. Most men and women will grieve in a blended style. The following gives some general insights into the 'male' style of grief.

Society encourages the image of a strong man in charge of his feelings rather than hurt, frightened or in emotional pain. And often, to express this pain to others is to be perceived as "less than a man." Painful, overwhelming emotional feelings can also shatter a man's personal belief system that he can always keep events - and himself - under control.

The truth is that men grieve just as strongly and painfully as women do, but they sometimes look and sound different. Because they tend not to ask for support, men will often appear less affected by a death - a great misunderstanding. Some men think that talking about the death is futile. Rather, they will focus on the future and deal with their grief through productivity and activity. Male grievers may mourn their losses



in creative, intellectual and practical ways - from building a deck to taking long silent walks. How a man 'tells' his story doesn't matter, as long as it is told.

### ***I think I'm listening to the wrong people.***

The grief process is unique to each individual, but too often, a 'one size fits all' mentality is applied to those who have lost a loved one. It is vital that each mourner has the proper practical, spiritual and emotional support so that he or she can grieve in his or her own way and time. One of the greatest gifts during mourning is the presence of a strong support system. Well-meaning family members, friends and co-workers are often good at providing the practical necessities, but often unintentionally fall short when it comes to the proper emotional and psychological support. Although the sharing of feelings with family and friends during mourning can be useful, the bereaved are often left with inappropriate advice and unrealistic timetables for their grief, adding to their already confused and tumultuous feelings.

Bereavement support groups provide an excellent opportunity for mourners to share their feelings and experiences in a caring, non-judgmental, confidential setting. (*See Ministry Resources at the time of Loss, p. 39*). These are not therapy groups. Rather, group facilitators are trained to provide information about the grief process and conduct discussions on a variety of topics pertaining to loss. Participants can find education, affirmation and hope within these settings. Another source of emotional support can be found in individual counseling. For a number of reasons, some bereaved people require a deeper level of assistance and need to resolve their grief issues working one-on-one with a professional therapist who is trained to provide the proper psychological guidance for them.

### ***People say I go to the cemetery too often.***

In order to successfully resolve our grief we first need to engage it. In order to weaken the powerful grip of our pain, we need to find ways to actively tap into it and dilute it, little by little. How we do this connects us to our grief.

When we "connect" to our grief, we choose appropriate ways to encounter it, usually for manageable periods. These activities or rituals are important because over time, they can serve to soften and eventually dissipate the pain. People who make the connection to their grief through words will often find themselves writing about their losses. Those who strongly connect to their grief through the spoken word might find themselves talking about the loved one to others or sharing experiences in a support group or therapy group. Those with musical sensibilities or talents might engage their grief while playing an instrument, composing or simply listening to favorite, shared musical pieces. Some might page through old photo albums - or create new ones - while others will mourn while walking or running on a favorite path. Still others will create memorials through a familiar hobby such as painting, sewing or woodworking. Strong connections are also obviously made through faith traditions and prayer. However, there is one way of connecting to grief that can bring mixed emotions - visiting the cemetery.

The cemetery (or mausoleum) can represent treasured, sacred space to the mourner, but it also confirms the stark reality of death. Perceptions about the cemetery can also vary as a result of ethnic, cultural, spiritual, and familial influences and preferences. Those who connect to their loss at the gravesite can find it to be a place of true mourning. While it is a spot that teaches us over and over again that the loss is final, it is also a space where our most beloved memories reside. Many who grieve at the gravesite express their connection to the loved one by planting flowers or by praying, speaking or reading (aloud or silently) during



the visit. The cemetery can help mourners realize and appreciate their wonderful ties to the past while, over time; they gain strength and inspiration for the future. We need to confront and engage grief if we are to ultimately resolve it. The ways that we choose to do this will vary, and visiting the cemetery is one.

### ***Our co-worker's husband died and she has returned to work. How can we help?***

In marriage, spouses define their roles and each other. They build a family and share a life, sometimes for many years. When a spouse dies, it is no wonder, then, that the surviving spouse feels as if a part of them has also been lost. Your co-worker is mourning the loss of her husband and learning how to 'be' in the world without him. In addition to these enormous tasks, she also finds herself reengaged in the workplace. It is important to understand that your co-worker cannot just leave her grief at home. She may seem preoccupied, distracted and very sad at work. You can support her by spending some extra time with her during breaks or at lunchtime, giving her an opportunity to talk about her husband and the death if she wants to. Grieving people find it difficult to ask for assistance and you might want to ask your co-worker what specific things you can do to help her. An understanding, compassionate work environment will be a wonderful gift as she attempts to resolve her grief.

### ***Where is God?***

The death of a loved one affects us emotionally, physically and spiritually. It is natural and normal that we cry out to God and at God in our anguish. Some experience a deepening of their faith in the midst of grief, but many struggle with feelings of anger and abandonment in their questioning and search for a meaning for the death. These unfamiliar and confusing emotions can cause us to seek both explanation and solace. The guidance of a priest or certified

spiritual director conversant with this aspect of the grief process can be invaluable.

### ***I haven't been feeling well since the death.***

The death of a loved one is a major life event that affects us emotionally, spiritually, socially, psychologically and physically. Our general health can absolutely be impacted by the loss and the significant stresses it brings, and any symptoms or concerns that develop should be discussed with your health care professional immediately.

### ***I'm not sure how to help my children with this loss.***

There are many misperceptions concerning childhood grief that have resulted in children becoming the 'forgotten' mourners in society. Death is a fact of daily life that is widely reflected in the media, yet we remain a grief-avoiding culture. We do not like to think of children as experiencing a certain level of loss and emotional pain, so we often try to spare them the realities of death. The truth is that children love, bond and then need to uniquely grieve their losses, just as adults do. When a death occurs, we must be aware, as adults, of our own grief needs, keeping them separate from those of the child. Adults need to affirm and support a child's grief. We need to create an empathic environment for the child where he or she can express deep feelings and be understood from a child's point of view.

Developmental psychology tells us that a child senses loss as early as infancy. Pre-school children are aware of death but generally view it as temporary and reversible. Grade school children, particularly as chronological age increases, develop an ability to think abstractly and understand that death is irreversible. Younger children will require literal, concrete explanations about death. They will also have less vocabulary available to them to explain their feelings and may require alternative venues

for their grief. Adolescents, while struggling with social pressures and the developmental tasks of separation and the establishment of independence, also straddle the world between childhood and adulthood - and their grief will reflect that. Teens should understand that they are entitled to support while taking all the time they need to mourn.

Support groups designed specifically to deal with childhood and adolescent loss issues are available in numerous communities in addition to individual and family counseling. (*See Ministry Resources at the time of Loss, p. 39*).

There are also many excellent books that can help a child or teen deal with loss. Children, like adults, need to know that it's all right to speak about the death, cry and feel sad and lonely for as long as they need to.

### ***I don't know if my children should attend the funeral.***

Attendance at the vigil and funeral are ways for children and teens to honor and affirm the person who has died. It is also an opportunity for a family to teach its young people that life will go on after this death. Rituals are ways to express loss. Children, like adults, need to ritualize their losses, and going to the vigil, funeral liturgy or cemetery can allow them to do so. They can then start on the important healing task of establishing a new relationship with the deceased.

Realistically, the decision for a child or teen to participate at the vigil, funeral liturgy or cemetery will ultimately depend upon parental, ethnic and cultural norms and preferences. It is generally thought, however, that children should be allowed to attend if

they wish but never forced at any point. If a child or adolescent does attend, it is imperative that he or she has the proper age-appropriate physical and emotional support before, during and after the experience. We as adults need to talk about what the child will see or hear and be very observant of their reactions. In doing so, the child will 'teach' us what the death experience means to him or her, and we can respond accordingly.

### ***How else can I help my child once she returns to 'everyday life'?***

Following the funeral, your grieving child will re-enter her 'former' world, one that is chock full of activities, interests, friends, and the many demands of school. In that world, many adults are present - teachers, relatives, coaches, religious educators and other school professionals. It is important that the influential adults in your child's life know she is actively mourning the loss of a loved one. They need to understand that the grief process for children - like adults - can be disorganized and unpredictable, and that your daughter needs an environment that is safe, accepting and affirming of her loss. School social workers and psychologists can recommend and implement modifications to ease your child's transition,

as can the school principal and her classroom teacher. Likewise, those involved in your child's religious education can provide age-appropriate catechetical resources to help her engage the emotional and spiritual aspects of death. Inform your child's catechist and the parish catechetical leader of your child's loss





## *We Remember, We Believe*

and ask what materials and staff are available to assist her in her mourning. (*See Ministry Resources at the time of Loss*, p. 39).

### ***I dread the holidays.***

There are phenomena called anniversary and holiday reactions that are common to almost all who have lost a loved one. In short, these are times of temporarily intensified grief. These normal upsurges in emotion seem to occur most often around birthdays, anniversaries, holidays and other special occasions, however, for many, certain sights, sounds and scents will trigger their emotions at any point throughout the year. It is during these events that we are most painfully reminded of the absence of our loved ones. As a result, we experience heightened sadness and other intense emotions. In addition, having developed some sense of security in the uniformity of our everyday lives following the death, we can be easily disturbed by the unpredictability of a holiday or special occasion.

It is important to realize that distress at these ordinarily 'happy' times is normal - it is unrealistic to think otherwise. In most cases, these very intense feelings are transitory. Holidays are bittersweet following a death. We think about our loved ones more intensely, replay past events and compare. Some families restructure their celebrations completely after a death while some continue their rituals exactly as they had before. Still others agree to keep some traditions and discard others. Ultimately, each family will need to renegotiate and decide what observances best meet its individual and collective needs following a loss. Some parish-based support groups and hospice organizations provide special sessions for those needing extra help 'getting through the holidays.' (*See Ministry Resources at the time of Loss*, p.39).

### ***No one understands what this loss means to me. People say, "She was just a friend."***

We all seem to make judgments about the

intensity of another's grief - and certainly its appropriateness - based upon a variety of personal and cultural factors. Sadly, when this happens, a person's grief is not fully recognized, affirmed or supported, and he or she is then left to mourn in silence.

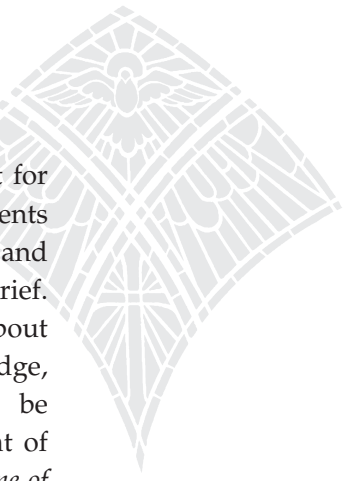
We often mistakenly believe that the very young or very old are incapable of true mourning and less in need of our support. Likewise, we can also judge some losses to be of lesser significance - miscarriage, the 'social' death of dementia, etc. - and withhold full support when it is needed most. Other times, we might not try to understand the grief of those mourning relationships undefined by biological bloodlines, i.e., 'just a friend.' And we must not omit the countless people who will deeply mourn the death of a pet. Pet loss is hardly trite. Companion animals play huge psychological and symbolic roles in the lives of individuals and can actually be emotional links to deceased loved ones. There are also many who will self-disenfranchise, feeling they do not have the right to openly and fully grieve a friend, teacher or neighbor, since judgment may be just around the corner. And we may not give full support to those whose ethnic and cultural traditions during mourning are unfamiliar to us.

The grief response is based on the depth and intensity of the relationship and all who mourn deserve our support and understanding in their losses.

### ***My daughter died - it wasn't supposed to happen this way.***

The loss of a child brings profound grief. The parent-child bond is said to be the most intense human relationship physically, psychologically, emotionally and socially. When a child dies, part of 'you' is lost as well. The perpetuation of your family is altered and with it, all your hopes and plans for the future. Loss from genetic illness can carry guilt and regret. The death of an adult child can mean losing a rich, multi-faceted relationship that has matured





and developed over time while the loss of a young child destroys the potential for a fully-lived lifetime. No matter what the age of your child or the circumstances surrounding the death, there is still the realization that the death is 'out of order' and contrary to the natural life cycle. The loss is illogical and one that destroys your belief that you, the parents - the protectors - will die before your children. This results in overwhelming, confusing and sometimes frightening feelings as you attempt to adjust to the reality of your child's death.

The death of a child of any age is a complicated loss that brings with it overwhelming emotions. As overpowering as they can be, these feelings are normal and necessary in the mourning process. Parents have found it helpful to share these unique feelings with those who have also experienced this very difficult kind of grief. Support groups for parents whose children have died have been found to be invaluable in the recovery process. Other parents who have suffered this loss can offer understanding and hope for the future. (*See Ministry Resources at the time of Loss, p. 39*).

### ***My grandson died but I don't know what I can do for my daughter.***

It has been said that grandparents grieve twice – once for their beloved grandchild and again for their own child. Grandparents can play significant practical and emotional roles in the lives of their grandchildren and often forge deep, bonded relationships with them. When a grandchild dies, however, the bonds are broken and your family legacy is altered. You may even wonder why you have survived your grandchild.

When you became a parent, you began a lifetime of trying to protect your own child from pain and disappointment. However, there is no protection you can offer your son or daughter from the ultimate pain of losing a child. This can leave you feeling helpless and frustrated as you mourn. You may also feel as if you need to be strong and take charge - to be the parent.

Providing practical and emotional support for your child is valuable, but many grandparents are not fully attentive to their own needs and do not take the time to process their own grief. Support groups, counseling, and reading about grief on your own can provide knowledge, insight and coping strategies that will be invaluable for your own recovery and that of your child. (*See Ministry Resources at the time of Loss, p. 39*). It is ideal to establish a respectful, open and sharing environment within your family system where members, young and old, are genuinely heard and supported.

### ***When will I be "over" this?***

It seems the general opinion of our society is that the sooner one 'moves on' after the loss of a loved one, the better it is. Recovery, however, is actually a slow, painful and complex process. Truthfully, we as human beings do not "get over" a death. Rather, we integrate the experience of the loss into our lives, adjust to it, and learn to live in the world without our loved ones. This is an ongoing process.

When we lose someone, we can, in fact, also lose parts of ourselves for a while. We are often able to recover missing aspects of our personalities, but there are some facets of our former selves that we will never reclaim. As a result, pressures from family, friends, the workplace and ourselves often have us scrambling to be just as we were before the death - an impossible and frustrating task. The death of a loved one will change us in conscious and unconscious ways. When the bulk of our grief work has been accomplished within the final phase of our active mourning, we will emerge in a reinvented form. We will have learned to enjoy some things just as we did before and engage life in ways we never thought we would, or could. And most importantly, we will have learned to "be" differently in the world. This accommodation takes tremendous effort, patience and time.



## ETERNAL LIFE – THE CONTINUING JOURNEY

### *Reflections*

#### ***Make peace with dying loved ones, be there for the bereaved***

When Tony Guida's father was dying, he tried to help his mother prepare for her husband's passing.

Guida, former senior nurse at St. Rose's Home, a New York cancer hospice run by the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, encouraged his mother to talk to his father.

"I realized his time was not going to be that long. My mother was holding on, but I could see that my father was ready to go. I said, 'Mom, you better talk to dad because he's not going to be around much longer,'" Guida said.

Initially, she had trouble accepting her husband was near death. Guida said the couple had some old wounds that he hoped could be healed before his father died.

"They did talk and I think the things they said to each other made it easier for them to say goodbye and share the fact that they loved each other," he said.

"The fact that he said, 'I'm sorry; I love you very much,'" Guida noted, "helped to heal" the pain caused when his father was younger and "are the words that she'll remember."

At St. Rose's Home, where the families of residents often had months to prepare for their loved one's death, Guida said staff would gently encourage people to try and reconcile past hurts and conflicts.

"Once the person is gone, you can't resolve those issues, and it becomes more difficult for people to let go and go through the process of healing," said Guida, resident-care coordinator at Rivington House, a nursing home for HIV-

positive patients on New York's lower East Side.

Guida's background as an end-of-life care practitioner and his father's period of illness helped the family to prepare for the father's death. However, the sudden death of a loved one can present a complicated period of emotional adjustment.

"When someone dies suddenly, the family doesn't have a chance to say goodbye, and it's a very difficult situation," said Rae Pistoni, chaplain at Northwest Community Hospital in Arlington Heights, IL, and a member of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.

"It takes them a lot longer to cope because they haven't had the chance to do any of the preparatory stuff," she said.

Pistoni said that someone trying to help a family member deal with the recent or impending death of a loved one should listen and be a gentle presence in that person's life.

"The best thing anyone can do is be a good listener," she said. "Let them talk about their feelings, their hurt.

"Go there and sit with the person and hold their hand. Be there for them and don't tell them how to feel."

*Stephen Steele*

#### ***When parents face the imminent loss of a child***

Joy quickly turned to disbelief for Carol and Dave Schneider of Florissant, MO, when they learned their newborn son would not live long: Joshua had a life-threatening chromosomal disorder called trisomy.

But with the help of the Footprints palliative care program at SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital in St. Louis, the Schneiders



## *We Remember, We Believe*

developed a plan to care for him at home and received the emotional and spiritual support needed to face his death.

Emotionally, it was “a huge roller coaster,” Dave Schneider told Catholic News Service. “One day you’re expecting a newborn child, and within an hour of delivery they’re telling you that he might not make it through the night.”

Born Feb. 10, 2004, Joshua died 77 days later.

The Schneiders had no warning their baby would be born with the disorder.

Each year about 400 babies are born in the United States with trisomy. They have an extra chromosome that causes physical deformities and often organ abnormalities, including heart problems. The babies die from complications.

Joshua’s organs were not affected, but he had an extremely small lower jaw, making it difficult for him to breathe and swallow. That made it difficult for him to eat, according to Carol Schneider.

“The first day was kind of surreal,” she said. “They were telling me what they suspected... but trying to grasp that and understand that was very hard, so I spent the first day sort of in shock and then the next day crying.”

Doctors told the Schneiders they couldn’t do much for Joshua. But they passed along a pamphlet about Footprints, and the couple’s pediatrician contacted the program.

According to Sister Judy Carron, R.S.M., a Footprints nurse and chaplain who coordinates clinical care, the first step is forming a care team, including one of the family’s doctors.

“We try ... to offer families hope - not unrealistic hope, but we do believe that we concentrate not on the dying, but we concentrate on the living,” she said. “And on living well and how we can help them reach goals that are attainable.”

The first goal often is just to get the baby or child home, she noted.

A team member is on call 24 hours a day. A parent can call with an emergency medical

situation or just to talk. Team members also call the parents regularly; after a child dies, team members keep in touch with parents for about two years.

“Nobody really thinks about celebrating the journey toward the end of life, and one of the things we want to do is to help make that as meaningful as possible and realize that it is a sacred time,” said Sister Judy.

Footprints has a quarterly memorial service in remembrance of children who have died, and families always are invited to attend.

Parents whose terminally ill child is being treated at Cardinal Glennon ([www.cardinalglennon.com](http://www.cardinalglennon.com)) are referred to Footprints by doctors or nurses. But referrals also come from outside the hospital, as was the Schneiders’ case.

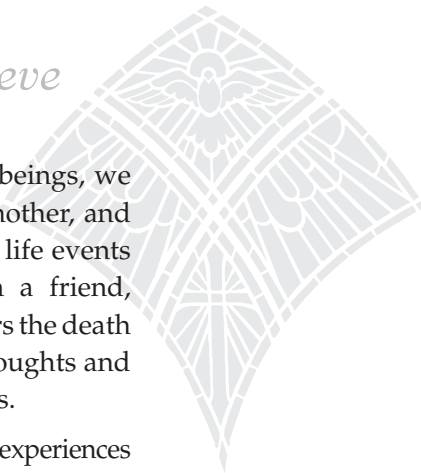
Sister Judy said the program also helps parents of toddlers and older children, not just newborns, and expectant parents facing the birth of a child with a life-threatening disease.

Other Catholic hospitals have pediatric palliative care programs, including Christus Santa Rosa Children’s Hospital in San Antonio, TX, ([www.christussantarosa.org/svc\\_children\\_palliative.htm](http://www.christussantarosa.org/svc_children_palliative.htm)) and the St. Vincent hospitals throughout central Indiana ([www.stvincent.org/ourservices/hospice/hospiceservices/pedshospice/default.htm](http://www.stvincent.org/ourservices/hospice/hospiceservices/pedshospice/default.htm)).

At Christus Santa Rosa, the primary goals of the Pediatric Supportive and Palliative Care Program “are to provide comfort, minimize suffering and preserve the dignity and integrity of the child and family, and achieve the best quality of life possible, consistent with the patient’s and the family’s values.”

St. Vincent team members develop a care plan for families and provide practical and emotional support.

“Sometimes that means going to the grocery store or running errands,” says the program’s web site. “Other times it means listening, sharing memories of happy times or simply talking about the anticipated loss.”



"Footprints was there every time we needed something," Dave Schneider said.

Months after Joshua's death the Schneiders and their other sons -Andrew, 8, and Zachary, 5 - still were coping with their loss.

"I have so many feelings that cannot yet be resolved," said Carol Schneider. "Why Joshua? Why us? "

But she added, "What I would tell other parents experiencing a similar situation is to remember there is joy in life... I always felt he was giving so much of himself to be with us."

*Julie Asher*

### ***I know how you feel***

A death has occurred. Someone has lost a loved one. Hearing the news, we make the decision to visit the funeral home or attend the funeral Mass. Perhaps we start preparing a meal or two for the family or we offer to run errands. Some of us will only have the opportunity to express our sympathies by phone or letter, others by chance encounter around town. Many will have to wait until a colleague returns to work.

Whatever the scenario, a certain dialogue is likely to occur. With genuine concern, we will tell our grieving friend or relation that we are sorry to hear of their loss. We will ask how they are doing, and following the exchange of a few thoughts, the inevitable happens. Somewhere tucked inside this conversation will be the words, "I know how you feel."

"I know how you feel." This phrase is generally considered to be the most oft-spoken - and most misunderstood - expression of condolence in our society.

When someone dies, we can feel hopeless and at a loss for real words of sympathy. We want to express concern and support for our grieving friend or relation, and speaking the words, "I know how you feel," is a way of connecting to the griever, conveying the sense of shared human experience. It is another way of saying, "I have been there. I have suffered, too."

"I know how you feel." As human beings, we are emotionally "wired into" one another, and we can be affected by the emotions, life events and losses of other people. When a friend, neighbor, co-worker or relative suffers the death of someone near, it often triggers thoughts and memories of our own lost loved ones.

As we reflect on the painful emotional experiences of our losses, we often feel, or are sure, that our grief experiences are very similar, if not identical, to another's. (We're all human beings, aren't we?) And, being seasoned travelers on the journey through grief, we are also very sure we can provide an appropriate roadmap for others as they make their way through the painful and turbulent feelings that are sure to come.

"I know how you feel." Whatever the origin or motivation behind these words, perhaps we should step back and consider a few things before we speak them yet again.

Although our experiences can be very similar, we can never truly know how another person feels. Human relationships are unique, thereby making each grief reaction unique. Just like the proverbial snowflake, no two are alike. And, because each grief reaction is singular, the ways we react to the death and process the loss cannot be compared to that of another.

**With this in mind, it is clear we need to adopt a new dialogue with those who grieve. Rather than "I know how you feel," perhaps we need to say, "Tell me how you feel."**

*Janet McCormack, M.A.*

*mccormja@rcan.org*

*(973) 497-4327*

### ***Death at a distance***

With so many seniors moving away from family roots to retirement destinations, more families are facing long-distance deaths and the unique challenges that accompany them.

This can include working with multiple funeral homes, shipping a body across country to a family burial plot, deciding which service to





## *We Remember, We Believe*

have where and taking care of a person's physical possessions.

Talking all of this over early on helps to shift the focus at the time of a death from overcoming challenges to cherishing a loved one's life.

Terry Brett, co-owner of Brett Funeral Home in St. Petersburg, FL, said he finds that families dealing with a death want to do the "right thing." He said, "When a family knows clearly what the person wanted, there is a peace in their minds."

Communication about this doesn't need to be formal, Brett noted. It can happen briefly during holidays when everyone is together. A written record can be sent to family members so that it is readily accessible.

"People feel like they are covered if they put that into a will. That's not really true," Brett said, adding that a will may not come into play until after the funeral. Children whose parents are getting up in years but who haven't made their wishes known should "figure out a way to have the conversation," he pointed out.

Knowing where the body ultimately will rest is important. Does Mom want to be buried at her present location, near remaining living family members, in a family plot or in an old hometown?

If the family isn't present at the time of a death, the hospital or nursing home will contact the individual specified by the patient when he or she was admitted, often asking during this call which mortuary the family wants them to contact.

Before passage in 1996 of the Health Insurance Privacy and Portability Act, (HIPPA) healthcare agencies could share patient information with others, including churches. But gone are the days a priest was called just because someone marked that they were Catholic.

"The HIPPA rules have kind of hurt many ministries to the aged and the infirm. Unless the family or the patient calls us, we don't know that they need ministry," said Msgr. Anton Dechering, pastor of Blessed Trinity

Church, St. Petersburg.

Today notice of a parishioner's death typically comes to the church through a funeral director, Msgr. Dechering said.

Brett said that a funeral home can communicate the family's wishes about services and burial to the church. But miscommunications are lessened when the family talks directly with the church, he added.

When distance is a factor, options exist for funeral and wake services. Vicki McCoy is administrative assistant to the rector and director of liturgy at the Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle, St. Petersburg. She works closely with families to carry out the deceased person's spiritual requests.

If a deceased person has lived in the community a relatively long time and has many friends, she recommends holding a wake and funeral Mass there. Some families opt to hold a wake where the deceased was living and a funeral Mass closer to the old hometown. Other families hold both services closer to the final resting place.

McCoy lets families know that the church has "a way for them to be part of the planning" for the service and helps them make it liturgically correct. Most parishes offer this option. Some don't participate in planning church services "because there are so many decisions that must be made at this time," she said.

After the funeral there may be the matter of finalizing the estate, which can involve selling a house and going through its contents. For some, distance may prevent extended stays or multiple trips. Detailing in a will what is to be done with specific keepsakes saves time and the potential for misunderstandings.

During the months following a burial, many churches offer support to the grieving. If family members remain behind to take care of the deceased person's estate, Msgr. Dechering said they are invited to the parish's monthly grief support ministry.

While the unique circumstances of each family's needs can create challenges, McCoy said the church is available to offer support. In addition to meeting spiritual needs, this can include direction and professional or service-oriented referrals.

"We try as much as we can from our end," McCoy said. "Whatever the family is needing, we are here."

*Elizabeth Wells*

### ***The wake and the vigil service: a time to share the reality of life and death***

The wake and the vigil service provide an opportunity for the community of faith to come together, usually the day before the funeral, to share the realities of life and death. By participating in a sacred ritual, they bring to consciousness the Christian dimension of death.

The wake allows people to come face-to-face with the reality of the death. It is a time for experiencing the pain, contemplating the meaning and fragility of life and wondering how life will go on without the person who has died.

It also allows the survivors time to be with the remains of the loved one before the final rite of committal.

The vigil service at the wake should follow the *Order of Christian Funerals*.

It is a time to gather together, read and reflect on Scripture readings, pray, share condolences, remember and celebrate the death of the loved one or friend.

The wake, although not during the vigil service itself, is the appropriate time for a eulogy or for testimonies from family members and friends, co-workers and others about the life of the deceased, using favorite stories,

reminiscences and even humor.

When a death is sudden, there is often little time for the fact of the situation to set in before the funeral. The survivors can be in a state of shock and disbelief.

In order to comprehend death's reality, it may be advisable to have an open casket at the vigil. Sometimes when the casket is closed, disbelief in the actuality of the death, and even fantasies, can develop.

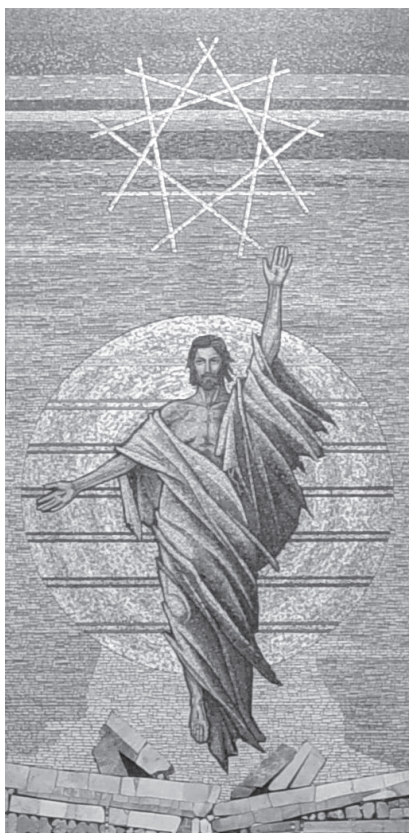
It can be important for a person to view the body - even touch it - to allow the mind and the body to come to terms with the reality of the death.

In general, children should be included in all aspects of the vigil and funeral. During this time of sadness and grief, children need to feel secure in the presence of the family and be involved in the rituals of mourning.

They must, however, be prepared for what they will encounter - events such as seeing and hearing a parent cry or witnessing someone faint. It is also important not to leave children alone. If a parent cannot be with them, then someone else whom they know and trust should serve as their companion.

If children do not want to attend the vigil or funeral, then take time to answer their questions and address

their concerns. Explain death realistically and honestly so they can proceed with their own grieving processes. Concentrate on what is important to them and do not give more information than necessary at the time. If they are still reluctant, do not pressure or force them to attend.





## *We Remember, We Believe*

Through its participation in the ritual of the vigil service, the faith community is able to grow in its understanding of the realities of life and death in relation to the promise of Jesus' resurrection to new life.

Most of all, when people gather at the vigil, they not only share the burden of grief but also realize the words of the prophet Isaiah (61:1-2), which described the healing ministry of Jesus:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,  
because the Lord has anointed me;  
He has sent me to bring glad tidings  
to the lowly,  
to heal the brokenhearted...  
to comfort all who mourn...

*Dianne L. Josephson*

### ***The Power of Candles in Prayer***

Did you ever realize the important role the candle plays in the prayer life of the Church? From the very beginning, candles were used in the catacombs of St. Callistus for Christian funeral rites celebrated over the tombs of those who gave their lives during the persecutions conducted by the Roman emperors. Today, candles are used at all Masses, including funerals and Masses celebrated for the living.

Candles are also used in the administration of the sacraments. During the Easter season, the paschal candle is a symbol of the Risen Christ, the light of the world, and is lit during the celebration of baptisms and funerals. Candles are also used in the ritual of some of the sacraments: the blessing of candles at the feast of the Presentation; the blessing of throats on the memorial of St. Blaise; the Advent wreath in preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ.

Today in private devotion, the burning votive candle is a symbol of prayers ever rising to heaven showing a return of God's love with warmth and cheer. As the candle is consumed, it is also a reminder of the sacrifices made by the individual.

There is a story told that during the 11th century, France was wracked by a most terrifying plague for over one hundred years. Hundreds died daily from what was called the Black Death.

The people, seeking protection, had recourse to the Blessed Virgin Mary by prayers, novenas, and candlelight processions. They prayed that through her intercession, Almighty God would come to their assistance and wipe out the plague.

During one of the candlelight processions in Arras, France, as each individual filed into the Church, it is said that the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared and presented her candle to Bishop Lambert at the altar. Some of the wax from her candle dripped into water and when those afflicted by the plague took a sip of the water, they were immediately cured. St. Bernard went to Arras to see the candle and reported that it never diminished in size.

In fact this candle continued to burn for another five hundred years.

Today the votive candle is used by the faithful to give continued praise to Almighty God when seeking or giving thanks for His special blessings and other divine favors. It may also become a prayerful memorialization of living or deceased loved ones and friends.

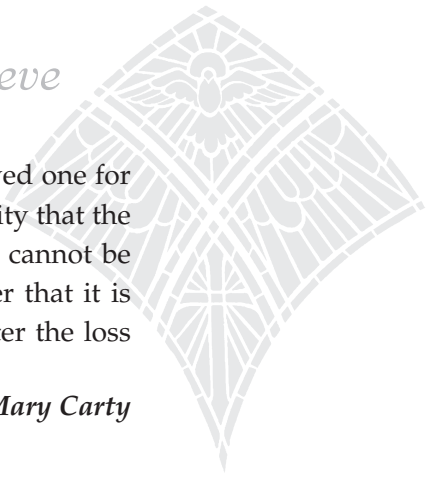
*Rev. Msgr. William B. Naedele*

### ***Mourning process extends well beyond day of funeral***

During the first days after the loss of a loved one, everyday tasks of life are replaced by those related to death.

Many hours are spent in notifying family members, friends and associates, writing and placing the obituary in the newspaper, and making arrangements and choices from the types of flowers to the Scripture readings and music for the wake, funeral service and burial. These tasks fill the mind and keep the body busy, not leaving much time to feel the pain of grief.





During this time there is usually a great deal of support available. The Church provides support from ministers and strength found through prayers offered and rituals performed at funeral and burial services. Family and friends offer food, assistance and their presence.

But after the funeral and after the support that was so readily available diminishes, the return to a normal routine without the loved one is accompanied by the deep sense of loss.

The disposition of the body takes just days. But working through the stages of grief takes months and sometimes years, as loved ones learn and draw upon coping skills and faith to take care of themselves and to care for the possessions and memory of the departed loved one.

During this time when people need faith-filled support, there are many spiritual-related resources available, including books, support groups and Church clergy and laity.

In her book *Help Is Here: A Spiritual Survival Manual for Times of Crisis* (Excelsior House Publishing, 2002), C.J. DeLong describes coping tools that she discovered while battling a life-threatening illness. She shares a series of prayers, meditations, lyrics and poetry she found helpful and recommends to those seeking healing.

Among her suggestions to those hurting include:

- ✓ Do regular, daily journaling.
- ✓ Have Masses said for the deceased.
- ✓ Read daily meditation books.
- ✓ Talk with others about feelings and memories.
- ✓ Take time to enjoy nature.
- ✓ Get involved in some fun activities.
- ✓ Reach out to help someone else.

Those who have experienced loss before are aware of the process and the length of time it takes to heal.

Those experiencing the loss of a loved one for the first time are faced with the reality that the grief process takes a long time and cannot be rushed. It is important to remember that it is human to feel pain and sadness after the loss of a loved one.

*Mary Carty*

### ***Depression and grieving***

Grief is not a sign of weakness. Rather, it is part of the natural process of letting go and getting ready for what will come. Maybe it is the human being's way to prepare, in doses small enough to handle, for that great loss that awaits us up ahead: our own passing.

But grief can go awry. There is an insidious illness that can grow out of mismanaged grief and that is really quite common: clinical depression.

In this condition the distress and functional impairments associated with grief—pessimism, anxiety, intense sadness, insomnia, concentration difficulties, social withdrawal, loss of sexual interest, vague physical complaints that defy diagnosis - refuse to go away.

If the depression state is mild enough, it may escape detection, but it exerts a destructive influence nonetheless. Professional assessment and treatment is a must.

Why would grief become an illness? The answer lies in a lack of sufficient resilience, that combination of personality and physical attributes with surrounding support systems that makes it possible for us to successfully transit the disruption caused by the stresses we encounter throughout our lives. Grieving is one of these, to say the least. How well we deal with it depends on how resilient we are.

Fortunately, resilience is something we can learn to develop before something happens. If we are resilient, we ultimately will be strengthened by healthy episodes of grief.

*Frederic Flach, M.D.*



# MINISTRY RESOURCES AT A TIME OF LOSS

## Office of Family Life Ministries

171 Clifton Avenue • Newark, NJ 07104

(973) 497-4327 (English) • (973) 497-4326 (Spanish)

Referrals to support groups and professional counselors

The Office of Family Life Ministries of the Archdiocese of Newark sponsors parish-based bereavement support groups and other services throughout the four counties of the Archdiocese. Archdiocesan groups are open to people of all faiths who are grieving the death of a loved one. Trained facilitators provide information on the grief process and help participants find support through the sharing of experiences.

### ***Parish Bereavement Support Groups***

To obtain information about existing parish bereavement support groups in Bergen, Essex, Hudson and Union counties in English, please contact the Office of Family Life Ministries at (973) 497-4327, or visit the website at [www.rcan.org/famlife](http://www.rcan.org/famlife) and click on Loss and Transition for contact information. To obtain listings in Spanish, please contact the Office of Family Life Ministries, at (973) 497-4326, or visit the website at [www.rcan.org/famlife](http://www.rcan.org/famlife) and click on Programas de Pérdida y Transición.

**Catechetical Office**  
**Archdiocese of Newark**  
171 Clifton Avenue  
Newark, NJ 07104  
(973) 497-4285  
[www.rcan.org](http://www.rcan.org)

**National Catholic**  
**Ministry to the Bereaved**  
PO Box 16353  
St. Louis, MO 63125  
(314) 638-2638  
[www.Griefwork.org](http://www.Griefwork.org)  
*Information, bibliography*  
*and resources*

**Rainbows of NJ**  
55 Woodland Avenue  
Summit, NJ 07901  
(908) 608-0888  
[www.rainbowsnj.org](http://www.rainbowsnj.org)  
*Childhood, adolescent and adult*  
*bereavement programs*

**The Compassionate Friends**  
(877) 969-0010  
[www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org)  
*Bereavement groups for parents whose*  
*children have died and their families*

**The Dougy Center**  
[www.dougy.org](http://www.dougy.org)  
*Programs for grieving*  
*children and their families*

**Comfort Zone Camp**  
2101-A Westmoreland Street  
Richmond, VA 23230  
(866) 488-5679

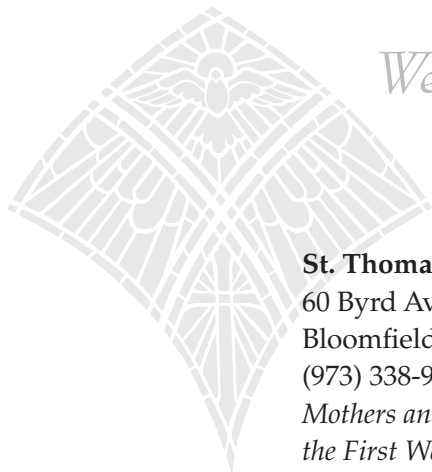
[www.ComfortZoneCamp.org](http://www.ComfortZoneCamp.org)  
*Bereavement program in NJ for*  
*grieving children and adolescents*

**American Association of Retired People**  
[www.aarp.org/families/griefandloss](http://www.aarp.org/families/griefandloss)  
*Bereavement information and resources*

**Catholic Charities of the**  
**Archdiocese of Newark**  
(973) 266-7982  
(800) 227-7413  
*Referrals, resources*  
*and services*

**New Jersey Psychological**  
**Association**  
(800) 281-6572  
(973) 243-9800  
[www.psychologynj.org](http://www.psychologynj.org)  
*Referral service*

**New Jersey Self-Help**  
**Group Clearinghouse**  
(800) 367-6274  
[www.selfhelpgroups.org](http://www.selfhelpgroups.org)  
*Referrals to local community*  
*agencies, self-help groups and*  
*crisis intervention*



## *We Remember, We Believe*

### ***Support Groups for Parents Whose Children Have Died***

#### **St. Thomas the Apostle Parish**

60 Byrd Avenue  
Bloomfield, NJ 07003  
(973) 338-9190

*Mothers and fathers may meet on  
the First Wednesday of each month  
at 7:30 PM*

#### **St. Peter the Apostle Parish**

445 Fifth Avenue  
River Edge, NJ 07661  
(201) 261-3366

*Mothers and fathers may meet  
on the Third Monday of each  
month at 7:30 PM*

#### **Notre Dame Parish**

359 Central Avenue  
North Caldwell, NJ 07006  
(973) 226-0979

*Meets quarterly (This group  
is limited to fathers whose  
children have died.)*

These support groups for parents whose children have died are sponsored by the Office of Family Life Ministries of the Archdiocese of Newark. For more information about the groups, or for driving directions, please call the Office of Family Life Ministries at (973) 497-4327. There is no pre-registration or fee, and groups are open to grieving parents of all faiths. Also, contact your local parish for bereavement group information.

### ***Young Adults and College and University Students***

Young adults and college students often have difficulty expressing their feelings at a time of the death of a family member or loved one. The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry and Campus Ministry provide venues for them to mourn and to receive counseling in their time of need.

If you or someone you know is mourning the loss

of a loved one and is between the ages of 13 and 39 years, please have them contact your parish Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministry who can direct you to the appropriate support group or contact us at the Archdiocesan Youth Retreat Center at (201) 998-0088 Extension "0".  
[www.NewarkOYM.org](http://www.NewarkOYM.org)

### ***Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry of the Archdiocese of Newark***

499 Belgrove Dr. • Kearny, NJ 07032  
Phone: (201) 998-0088 • Fax: (201) 299-0801

### ***Campus Ministry Resources***

Seton Hall University and Catholic Colleges

#### **Seton Hall University**

Boland Hall, Lower Level  
400 South Orange Ave.  
South Orange, NJ 07079  
(973) 761-9545  
Fax: (973) 761-7953  
[www.shu.edu](http://www.shu.edu)

#### **School of Law**

One Newark Center  
Newark, NJ 07102  
Chaplain: (973) 642-8859  
<http://law.shu.edu/>

#### **St. Peter's College**

Jersey City Campus  
2641 Kennedy Boulevard  
Dinneen Hall  
Jersey City, NJ 07306  
(201) 915-0131  
[www.spc.edu](http://www.spc.edu)

**Seton Hall University**  
Ryerson Avenue  
Caldwell, NJ 07006  
(973) 618-3000  
[www.caldwell.edu](http://www.caldwell.edu)

#### **Caldwell College**

#### **Felician College**

262 South Main Street  
Lodi, NJ 07644  
(201) 559-6000  
[www.felician.edu](http://www.felician.edu)



**Campus Ministry Archdiocese of Newark**

171 Clifton Ave • Newark, NJ 07104 • (973) 497-4305

**Bloomfield College**

Catholic Campus Ministry  
12 Austin Place  
Bloomfield, NJ 07003  
[www.bloomfield.edu](http://www.bloomfield.edu)

**Ramapo College of  
New Jersey**

Office of Campus Ministry  
505 Ramapo Valley Road,  
Rm SC-207  
Mahwah, NJ 07430-1680  
(201) 684-7251  
[www.ramapo.edu](http://www.ramapo.edu)

**Fairleigh Dickinson  
Interfaith Chapel**

1000 River Road/T-UCI-01  
Teaneck, NJ 07666  
(210) 692-2570  
[www.fdu.edu](http://www.fdu.edu)

**Campus Ministry for:**

**Rutgers University- Newark,  
New Jersey Institute of Technology  
Essex County College**

Newman Center  
91 Washington Street  
Newark, NJ 07102  
(973) 624-1301  
[www.catholiccampusministry.org/ncuh](http://www.catholiccampusministry.org/ncuh)

**Kean University**

Downs 130  
1000 Morris Avenue  
Union, NJ 07083  
(908) 737-5326  
[www.kean.edu](http://www.kean.edu)

**Stevens Institute  
of Technology**

SS. Peter & Paul  
404 Hudson Street  
Hoboken, NJ 07030  
(201) 659-2276

**New Jersey City University**

Gilligan Student Center, Rm. 319  
2039 Kennedy Boulevard  
Jersey City, NJ 07305

**University of Medicine &  
Dentistry of New Jersey  
(UMDNJ)**

65 Bergen Street, Rm 152  
PO Box 1709  
Newark, NJ 07101-1709

**Montclair State University**

Newman Catholic Center  
894 Valley Road  
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043  
(973) 746-2323  
[www.montclair.edu](http://www.montclair.edu)

**Union County College**

1033 Springfield Avenue  
Cranford, NJ 07016  
[www.ucc.edu](http://www.ucc.edu)

***Additional Resources:***

**New Jersey State Funeral Directors Association**, PO Box L, Manasquan, New Jersey 08736  
(800) 734-3712. [www.njsfda.org](http://www.njsfda.org)

Information and resources regarding death, dying and funerals in NJ, refer to page 76.

**Catholic Cemeteries** Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Newark

171 Clifton Avenue, P.O. Box 9500, Newark, NJ 07104  
(973) 497-7981 or 7988 [www.rcancem.org](http://www.rcancem.org)





## SACRAMENT OF THE SICK

Suffering and illness have always been among the greatest problems that trouble the human spirit. Christians feel and experience pain as do all other people; yet their faith helps them to grasp more deeply the mystery of suffering and to bear their pain with greater courage. From Christ's words they know that sickness has meaning and value for their own salvation and for the salvation of the world. They also know that Christ, who during his life often visited and healed the sick, loves them in their illness.

The Lord himself showed great concern for the bodily and spiritual welfare of the sick and commanded his followers to do likewise.

Those who are seriously ill need the special help of God's grace in this time of anxiety, lest they be broken in spirit and, under the pressure of temptation, perhaps weakened in their faith.

This is why, through the sacrament of anointing, Christ strengthens the faithful who are afflicted by illness, providing them with the strongest means of support.

Some questions & answers...

### ***What is the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?***

It is through this sacrament that the healing ministry of Jesus Christ is continued by the action of the Church. During His ministry, nobody went away from Jesus without experiencing some kind of healing, whether of body, mind, or spirit. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, this work is continued by the Church today, allowing people to experience the healing touch and presence of the Lord Jesus.

### ***Is this the same as "the last rites"?***

In the past, Anointing was looked upon primarily as being for the dying and was called "Extreme Unction." In the renewal of theology since the Second Vatican Council, there has been a rediscovery of the ancient roots of this sacrament as being for the sick rather than the dying. Properly speaking therefore, the last rite is not the Anointing of the Sick but Viaticum, the last Holy Communion of a person at the point of death.

### ***How is the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick celebrated?***

There are now three rites provided for Anointing. The first is for anointing celebrated outside of the Mass. This can be in the home, in the church, or in the hospital. Members of the sick person's family participate in the ceremony as do pastoral care ministers and the priest. This is intended to be the normal way the sacrament is celebrated.

The second is an anointing during Mass. This can be of one person or many persons.

Finally, there is a shortened rite, for emergencies only, which is usually used in the home or hospital if the person is in immediate danger of death. This is intended to be an exceptional case.

### ***What effects can be expected?***

The healing ministry of the Church follows that of Jesus and is concerned with the healing of the whole person, body, mind, and spirit. The goal of the sacrament is this total healing. Sometimes a person is cured of a bodily illness. Sometimes there is psychological or spiritual healing. What is certain is that healing is taking place that can strengthen a sick person and enable them to bear their illness. Relationships, both with God and other people can also be healed through this sacrament.

### ***Who should be anointed?***

Any person whose health is seriously impaired by illness or old age. A sick child should be anointed if they are old enough to derive a benefit from the sacrament.

### ***When should someone be anointed?***

As soon as it is clear that their health is seriously impaired due to sickness or old age, and if they suddenly enter a more acute stage of their illness. They may be anointed before surgery if this results because of serious illness. If at all possible, the sacrament should not be delayed until the person is at the point of death.

### ***What is the structure of an anointing service?***

Greeting, invitation to prayer, reading of The Word of God, laying on of hands, prayer over the oil, anointing, prayer, and blessing. Communion or Viaticum may follow the anointing.



## UNDERSTANDING CATHOLIC FUNERALS

Nothing affects us more profoundly than our relationships. We have been shaped by our relationships with our parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, aunts, uncles, other relatives, fellow students, teachers, employers, co-workers, neighbors and acquaintances.

As people of faith, we also have been shaped by our relationships with the members of our parish, other believers, priests, deacons, religious brothers, religious sisters, religious educators and others who minister in the Church. We have been most affected by our relationship with Jesus Christ who has made us part of his Church and sons and daughters of our Father in heaven.

Relationships form us. They shape us. They affect our heart and our spirit. They mold our personality and our view of life. They create ties of affection and love. They form friendships and connections that bind us together.

When someone we love dies, someone with whom we have had a human relationship, “we believe that all the ties of friendship and affection which knit us as one throughout our lives do not unravel with death.” (*Order of Christian Funerals*, 71) We hold that belief because of our faith in Jesus Christ, who through his death and resurrection conquered the power of sin and death. We believe death is not the end. We believe that life continues, that relationships continue. We affirm that each time we proclaim the profession of faith at Mass. “We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.”

Because of our belief that life continues, that relationships continue, we believe that our responsibilities to a loved one do not end in death. As Catholics we fulfill our obligations to the deceased, with whom we remain connected,

by lovingly following the rituals of the Church associated with death. In doing so, we proclaim that our relationship with the deceased has not ended and we proclaim our faith in Jesus Christ, who said “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me shall live even in death and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.” (John 11:25-26)

### ***The Order of Christian Funerals***

The ceremonies and prayers of the Catholic Church connected with death are found in the *Order of Christian Funerals* (OCF), the ritual book used by priests and deacons in conducting funeral services. A Catholic funeral ordinarily involves three occasions of prayer that take place over the course of two or three days. In celebrating these moments of prayer we celebrate our faith in Christ, we express our love for the person who has died, and we remain faithful to a human relationship that has touched our life. As we shared part of our loved one’s journey through life, we now share the steps of his or her final journey to God.

The ceremonies and prayers that comprise the funeral ritual are also ways that the Church shows its concern for one of its members. We became part of the family of the Church at our baptism and that relationship is not broken even by death.

The three principal parts of the Catholic funeral liturgy are the vigil service (commonly called the wake service), the church service, and finally the committal service. In these times of prayer, the Christian community accompanies the body of the deceased from the place of the wake, ordinarily the funeral home, to the church building, and then to his/her final resting place. The community of the Church that has accompanied the person in his or her

journey through life now walks with him or her from this life to the next.

Let us describe each of these parts.

## *I. The Vigil Service*

The vigil service takes place between the time of death and the time of the church service. The vigil usually takes place in the funeral home during the time of the wake or viewing.

In the vigil service, those who have been affected by the life of the deceased gather to pray for him or her. This is usually the first time since death when those related to the deceased gather together. "At the vigil the Christian community keeps watch with the family in prayer to the God of mercy and finds strength in Christ's presence...In this time of loss the family and community turn to God's word as the source of faith and hope, as light and life in the face of darkness and death. Consoled by the redeeming word of God and by the abiding presence of Christ and his Spirit, the assembly at the vigil calls upon the Father of mercy to receive the deceased into the kingdom of light and peace." (OCF, 56)

The vigil service consists of an opening rite, the reading of God's word, a homily or reflection, prayers of intercession and a blessing. This service is normally led by a priest or deacon, but if no priest or deacon is available, the vigil service may be conducted by a layperson, such as a pastoral associate from the parish. (OCF, 14)

The vigil begins with Introductory Rites that gather those present into a community of faith ready to hear God's word and ready to pray for the deceased. The introductory rites include a greeting of those present, an optional song, an invitation to silent prayer for the deceased and a spoken prayer by the leader.

The Liturgy of the Word follows these brief introductory rites. "The proclamation of the word of God is the high point and central focus of the vigil" (OCF, 59) A reading from the Scriptures is proclaimed either by the leader or another person. A responsorial psalm follows

this first reading. This psalm may be spoken or sung. A Gospel reading is then proclaimed. Following these readings, a brief homily or reflection is then given on the readings "to help those present find strength and hope in God's saving word." (OCF, 61)

Prayers of Intercession follow during which "the community calls upon God to comfort the mourners and to show mercy to the deceased." (OCF, 62) This part of the vigil service includes a litany, which may be sung, the Lord's Prayer and a concluding prayer by the leader. At this point, someone may speak in remembrance of the deceased, or this may be done after the vigil service or at another time. The hours of the wake at the funeral home provide many opportunities for such reminiscences.

The vigil service ends with a brief Concluding Rite that includes a blessing that varies on whether it is being given by an ordained minister or by a layperson. This blessing may include the signing of the forehead of the deceased with the sign of the cross. The vigil service may then conclude with a song, a few moments of silent prayer or both.

Besides providing a setting for the vigil service, a wake gives those who have suffered a loss the opportunity to face the death of their loved one, to adjust to a new reality, to find comfort and support in the company of others, to share stories and remembrances of the deceased and to express their sorrow and grief.

## *II. The Church Service*

The second of the three parts that comprise a Catholic funeral takes place in the church building. This is the place "where the community of faith assembles for worship. The church is the place where the Christian life is begotten in baptism, nourished in the Eucharist, and where the community gathers to commend one of its deceased members to the Father." (OCF, 131) The funeral Mass is the preferred service in the church and "the central celebration of the Christian community for the deceased." (OCF, 128)



At a funeral Mass, the casket is received at the church, sprinkled with holy water, and covered with a white cloth. These signs recall baptism, the sacrament that brought the deceased into a relationship with the Christian community. Afterwards, readings from the Scriptures and the Liturgy of the Eucharist take place as they normally do at a Sunday Mass. At the end of the funeral Mass the deceased is commended to God's mercy and the community expresses its farewell to someone who will no longer gather at its altar table, but whom we pray will be granted a place at God's heavenly table.

The funeral Mass begins with Introductory Rites that include the reception of the body. The priest goes to the doors of the church where he greets the mourners and receives the body of the deceased. At this time, the casket is sprinkled with holy water and covered with a white pall. These rites recall the sacrament of baptism by which the deceased was raised to a new relationship with God, given the promise of eternal life and made part of God's Church.

After the rites at the doors of the church, the casket is brought forward and placed near the altar. The people follow the casket and take their places in the assembly. During the procession all join in singing an appropriate hymn or psalm. At the conclusion of the song, the opening prayer is then prayed by the priest and all then sit for the Liturgy of the Word.

The Liturgy of the Word may follow the model of either a Sunday Mass or a weekday Mass. In other words, "depending on pastoral circumstances, there can be either one or two readings before the Gospel reading." (OCF, 138) The first reading and second reading should be proclaimed by a

reader from the parish, by a family member or friend capable of exercising this ministry.

The responsorial psalm that follows the first reading and the acclamation before the Gospel should be sung by a member of the music ministry. After the Gospel is proclaimed by either a priest or a deacon, the homily follows. "A brief homily based on the readings is always given after the Gospel reading at the funeral liturgy ... but there is never to be a eulogy.

Attentive to the grief of those present, the homilist should dwell on God's

compassionate love and on the paschal mystery of the Lord, as proclaimed in the Scripture readings."

(OCF, 27) The general intercessions conclude the Liturgy of the Word.

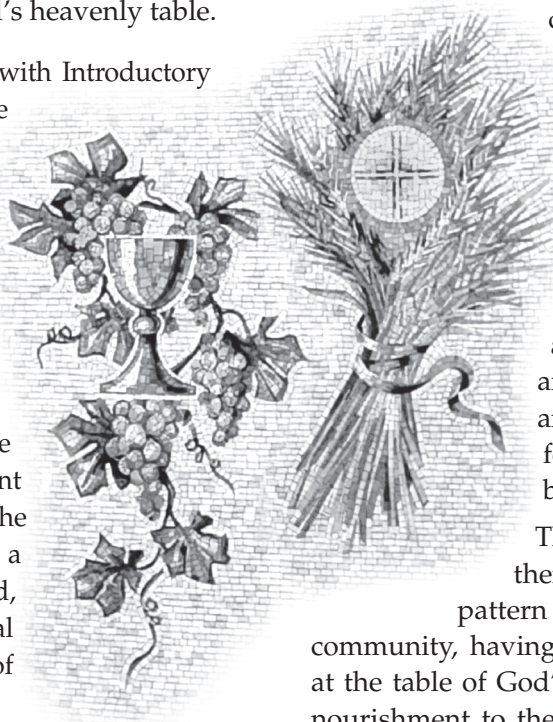
These intercessions may be proclaimed by a deacon, a reader or another person capable of announcing the intentions for which the community is being called to pray.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist then begins and follows the pattern of Sunday Mass. "The

community, having been spiritually renewed at the table of God's word, turns for spiritual nourishment to the table of the Eucharist... In partaking of the body of Christ, all are given a foretaste of eternal life in Christ and are united with Christ, with each other, and with all the faithful, living and dead." (OCF, 143)

The Liturgy of the Eucharist includes the presentation of the gifts, the eucharistic prayer and the distribution of holy Communion. At the start of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the gifts of bread and wine may be brought to the altar by relatives and friends of the deceased. It is not appropriate to present items associated with the deceased.

The Final Commendation, which follows the distribution of holy Communion, brings



the funeral Mass to its completion. "The final commendation is a final farewell by the members of the community, an act of respect for one of their members, whom they entrust to the tender mercy and merciful embrace of God. This act of last farewell also acknowledges the reality of separation and affirms that the community and the deceased, baptized into one Body, share the same destiny, resurrection on the last day." (OCF, 146)

The final commendation, which the priest leads as he stands near the casket, includes an invitation to prayer, a period of silence, the incensing of the casket, the song of farewell, and the prayer of commendation.

Before this final commendation begins, a family member or friend may speak in remembrance of the deceased. (OCF, 170) However, such words of remembrance are strictly optional, and in some places, they are not permitted at this time. Such words of remembrance are not a eulogy, but rather a short prayerful recollection of some aspect of the Christian life of the deceased.

The Procession to the Place of Committal follows the final commendation. The deacon or priest says "In peace, let us take our brother/sister to his/her place of rest." At this point the closing song begins and the priest and other ministers lead the casket from the church as the congregation follows. The mourners then accompany the body to its place of final disposition where the rite of committal is celebrated.

On a day when a funeral Mass cannot be celebrated, such as on a holy day of obligation, Holy Thursday, Good Friday or Holy Saturday, the body of the deceased is still brought to the church building. Instead of a Mass another type of church service is celebrated. This service, which centers on God's word, is similar to a funeral Mass, but it does not include the Liturgy of the Eucharist. In other words, it includes the introductory rites, the Liturgy of the Word, the final commendation and the procession as described above. When this type of service is celebrated, a memorial Mass may and should be celebrated for the deceased at a later date.

### *III. The Committal Service*

Following the service in the church, the body is brought to its final resting place. Those related to the deceased continue to accompany him or her on this third part of the final journey. The body is transported to the cemetery or the mausoleum and there is committed to its place of rest. In a Catholic cemetery the body is also committed into the care of the wider Church community that is responsible for the cemetery and for the bodies of the deceased placed within it.

"The rite of committal, the conclusion of the funeral rites, is the final act of the community of faith in caring for the body of its deceased member." (OCF, 204) This service is usually led by the priest who has celebrated the funeral Mass. In his absence it may also be led by a deacon, a religious brother or sister, a pastoral minister in the parish, by a friend or family member or by the funeral director. (OCF, 215) The person leading the service should offer the prayers designated by the Church for the rite of committal.

The committal service consists of a short reading from Scripture, a prayer committing the deceased to his or her final resting place and commending the deceased to God in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection, a series of intercessions for the deceased, the Lord's Prayer and a blessing.

The committal service begins with an Invitation to prayer. Those gathered are invited to pray that the deceased may be welcomed to heaven and that one day they may be reunited with the deceased in the presence of Jesus Christ. This invitation is followed by a Scripture Verse taken from the New Testament.

A Prayer over the Place of Committal follows. This prayer varies, usually depending upon whether the place of committal is a Catholic or non-Catholic cemetery. The Words of Committal then follow as the body is committed to the ground or its place of interment. The



actual committal may take place at this time, or at the conclusion of the rite. Intercessions for the deceased now follow. These intercessions may be read by someone other than the priest, deacon or layperson leading the service. After these intercessions, the Lord's Prayer is prayed. This is followed by a Concluding Prayer and a Prayer over the People. This final prayer varies depending upon whether it is offered by a priest, deacon or by a layperson.

After the prayer over the people, a song may bring the service to an end and a gesture of leave-taking may take place. For example, the mourners may place flowers or soil on the casket.

### ***Burial, Entombment and Cremation***

The final disposition of the body of a deceased Catholic may take place in one of three ways. The body may be buried in the ground, entombed in a mausoleum, or may be cremated and the human remains then interred. While cremation is permitted, the Church clearly prefers that bodies of its members be buried or entombed. "The long-standing practice of burying the body of the deceased in a grave or tomb in imitation of the burial of Jesus' body continues to be encouraged as a sign of Christian faith. However, owing to contemporary cultural interaction, the practice of cremation has become part of Catholic practice in the United States..." (*Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites, Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, 1997*)

If cremation is chosen as the final disposition of the body, the cremation should take place after

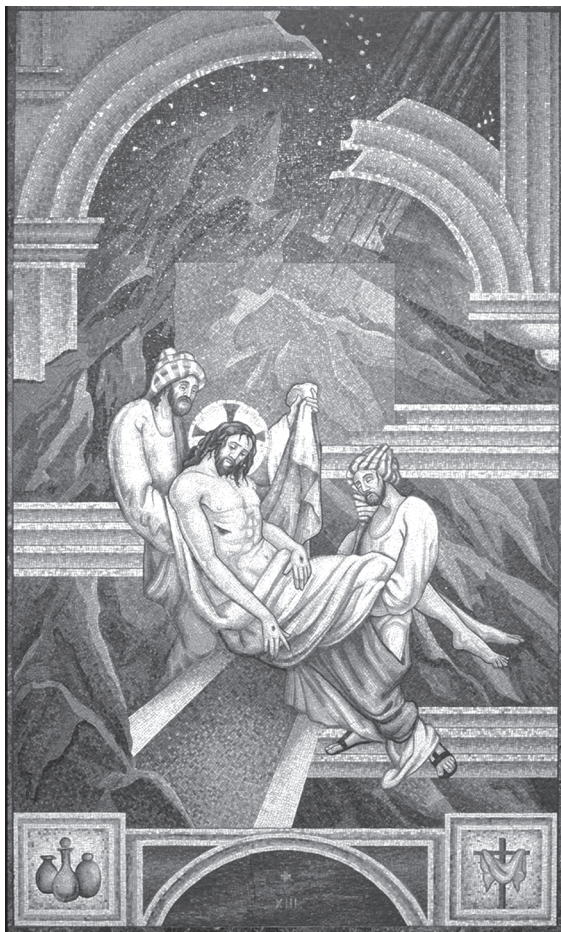
the church service and not before since Catholic funeral rites are designed to be celebrated in the presence of the body. After the vigil service and the church service, the body is taken to the crematorium and there a committal service

may be celebrated. When the cremated remains or "ashes" are returned to the family, these cremated remains are to be buried in a cemetery or entombed in a mausoleum. The committal service may be repeated at this time. **Our reverence for the cremated human remains does not allow them to be scattered, separated or disposed of in any other way.**

In other words, if the body of the deceased is to be cremated, the vigil service and the church service take place as described earlier. The family and mourners gather in the presence of the body for the vigil service. At the

appropriate time, the body is brought to the church for the church service. After this service, the body is brought to the crematorium.

If the mourners accompany the body to the crematorium, a rite of committal is celebrated there. The mourners then depart, and the body of the deceased is cremated at a later time. Some days later, the cremated remains of the deceased are returned to the family. These cremated remains are then buried in a cemetery or entombed in a mausoleum. When this occurs, the family members and friends gather once more, now to commit the cremated human remains to their final resting place.



#### ***IV. Direct Cremation***

For particular reasons, the body of the deceased is sometimes cremated before the preferred funeral rites of the Church may be celebrated. This is called direct or immediate cremation. This might occur, for instance, when a person dies a great distance from home. The family might decide to have the body cremated since shipping cremated remains is not as difficult as transporting a human body. Direct or immediate cremation may also be chosen for health reasons, if the person were to die of an infectious disease. It could also be chosen if prolonged severe weather, or some natural disaster, would not allow the usual funeral rituals to take place.

#### ***Services with the Cremated Remains***

Since 1997, the Church's Funeral Rites may be celebrated in the presence of the cremated human remains. It is the Church's preference that its funeral rites take place in the presence of the body of the deceased and not in the presence of the cremated remains, "since the presence of the human body better expresses the values that the Church affirms in its rites." (*Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites*, Committee on the Liturgy, NCCB, 1997) Assurance must be given that cremated remains will be properly buried or entombed. If a family indicates that the remains are to be scattered or disposed of in an inappropriate way, the cremated remains may not be present in the church for a funeral liturgy. Scattering is contrary to Catholic teaching that says the cremated human remains should be handled with the same reverence with which we handle a human body.

If the cremated remains are to be present during the funeral rites, those rites take place in the following manner. If there is a wake and the cremated remains have already been returned to the family, the wake should take place in the presence of the cremated remains and the vigil service should be celebrated. "It is appropriate

that the cremated remains of the body be present for the full course of the funeral rites, including the Vigil for the Deceased, the Funeral Liturgy, and the Rite of Committal." (*Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites*, Committee on the Liturgy, NCCB, 1997)

The church service takes place in the following way. The urn containing the cremated remains may be carried into the church by a member of the family. The priest, waiting at the doors of the church, greets the people, and then he sprinkles the cremated remains with holy water. Following that, the priest and ministers proceed to the altar. The bearer with the cremated remains walks behind them, and then the mourners follow.

The urn with the cremated remains is placed on a stand in the position normally occupied by the casket. The Easter candle may be placed near the cremated remains. This stand is not intended for mementos or other memorabilia, any more than a casket in church is a place for such items. The cremated remains are not covered with any type of pall or white cloth. (*OCF Appendix*, 434) When all have taken their places, the priest goes to the presidential chair where he prays the opening prayer of the funeral liturgy. The rest of the church service takes place as usual.

It should be noted that the cremated remains should be in a dignified urn, and not in the cardboard box, or the plastic or metal shipping container in which they were returned from the crematory. (*OCF Appendix*, 417) "Care must be taken that all is carried out with due decorum." (*OCF Appendix*, 427) If the cremated remains are not carried into the church during the service, they are placed on the stand by the Easter Candle before the service begins.

The rite of committal follows the church service. The Church strongly recommends that a memorial plaque or stone recording the name of the deceased be placed where the cremated remains are buried or entombed. (*OCF Appendix*, 417)





## **A Difference**

The celebration of the funeral rites in the presence of the cremated remains should look different and feel different from those celebrated in the presence of a human body. The prayers are slightly altered and the signs and symbols are somewhat different. There should be no attempt to make a funeral liturgy in the presence of the cremated remains look like one celebrated in the presence of a human body. For example, the urn with the cremated remains should not be placed in a casket or in some type of receptacle that brings a casket to mind. The urn should not be carried on a device that allows for the use of pall bearers. An urn with cremated remains is not a casket requiring a carriage or the use of pall bearers. The urn should not be covered with any type of miniature funeral pall.

Again, it should be stressed that the funeral rites taking place in the presence of the cremated human remains address a special or extraordinary situation. The Church wishes to show its compassion to families dealing with immediate or direct cremation, but at the same time the Church wishes to recommend that its funeral rites take place in their usual sequence, and in the presence of the body of the deceased.

## **Reverence**

Catholics celebrate the funeral rituals with care and reverence. We do so because we value the body of the deceased. For this was a “body once washed in baptism, anointed with the oil of salvation and fed with the bread of life. This is the body whose hands clothed the poor and embraced the sorrowing.” (*Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites, Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy, 1997*) This is also the body of a person with whom we still have a relationship – the body of a parent, a sibling, a relative, a friend, a neighbor, a fellow Christian. Out of reverence for the human body, for our relationship with the deceased and for Jesus Christ the Lord of Life who conquered death, we celebrate these funeral rituals. For we are a people who believe that relationships, and the obligations and bonds that come with them, continue beyond death!

## **On the Subject of Eulogies**

In recent years, some have insisted on delivering, or have been urged to deliver, a eulogy during the Church Service. However, because of concerns about the misuse or misunderstanding of words of remembrance during a funeral, eulogies are not permitted during any of the funeral services. (cf. *OCF, 27*) It is understandable that at this particular time some family members or friends may wish to speak words of remembrance for the deceased loved one. This is especially true when the traditional two or three day visitation period before the Church Service is reduced or eliminated. Pastoral ministers who work with families are sensitive to the needs of families at this time and some will try to accommodate a desire for a word of remembrance by a family member at some time prior to the Church Service or after the Committal Service. The most convenient time to deliver a eulogy is either

- during the time of the wake, but not during the Vigil Service itself, or
- at a repast, following the Committal Service.

## **Policy in the Archdiocese of Newark**

According to the *Order of Christian Funerals*, “A brief homily based on the readings is always given after the Gospel reading at the funeral liturgy and may also be given after the readings at the vigil service; but there is never to be a eulogy.” (*OCF, 27*)

In the Archdiocese of Newark, no eulogies are to take place within the context of any of the funeral liturgies including the vigil service, funeral Mass or the rite of committal.

Eulogies may be delivered during the time of visitation outside of the vigil service itself or at the cemetery following the rite of committal.

In a case of extraordinary pastoral need, words of remembrance based on the above guidelines may be delivered in the church ten minutes prior to the funeral liturgy.

# SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR FUNERALS

*(Taken from the Lectionary for Mass)*

As a general rule, all corresponding texts from sacred Scripture in the funeral rites are interchangeable. In consultation with the family and close friends, the minister chooses the texts that most closely reflect the particular circumstances and the needs of the mourners. (OCF, 344) The following suggestions are particularly appropriate for expressing the Christian meaning of death. Choose one reading from each of the following three categories: the first reading from the Old Testament or New Testament readings during the Easter season, the second reading and the gospel. **[For the shorter form of a reading, omit the part in the brackets.]** *(Indicate your choice of readings on the funeral services form on page 82)*

## **Reading I from the Old Testament**

*(Choose one to be read by an assigned reader.)*

1.

2 Maccabees 12:43-46

*He acted in an excellent and noble way as he had  
the resurrection of the dead in view.*

Judas, the ruler of Israel,

took up a collection among all his soldiers,  
amounting to two thousand silver drachmas,  
which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an  
expiatory sacrifice.

In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble  
way,  
inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in  
view;

for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise  
again,

it would have been useless and foolish to pray  
for them in death.

But if he did this with a view to the splendid  
reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in  
godliness,

it was a holy and pious thought.

Thus he made atonement for the dead that they  
might be freed from this sin.

2.

Job 19:1, 23-27a

*I know that my Vindicator lives.*

Job answered Bildad the Shuhite and said:

Oh, would that my words were written down!  
Would that they were inscribed in a record:

That with an iron chisel and with lead they were  
cut in the rock forever!

But as for me, I know that my Vindicator lives,  
and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust;

Whom I myself shall see:

my own eyes, not another's, shall behold him;

And from my flesh I shall see God;

my inmost being is consumed with longing.

3.

Wisdom 3:1-9 or 3:1-6, 9

*As sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.*

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 men, indeed 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.

[In the time of their visitation they shall shine,  
and shall dart about as sparks through stubble;





## *We Remember, We Believe*

They shall judge nations and rule over peoples,  
and the LORD shall be their King forever.]

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 his care is with his elect.

4.

Wisdom 4:7-15

*An unsullied life, the attainment of old age.*

The just man, though he die early,  
shall be at rest.

For the age that is honorable comes not  
with the passing of time,  
nor can it be measured in terms of years.

Rather, understanding is the hoary crown for men,  
and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age.

He who pleased God was loved;  
he who lived among sinners was transported—  
Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind  
or deceit beguile his soul;

For the witchery of paltry things obscures what  
is right  
and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent  
mind.

Having become perfect in a short while,  
he reached the fullness of a long career;  
for his soul was pleasing to the LORD,  
therefore he sped him out of the midst of  
wickedness.

But the people saw and did not understand,  
nor did they take this into account.

5.

Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9

*He will destroy death forever.*

On this mountain the LORD of hosts  
will provide for all peoples.

On this mountain he will destroy  
the veil that veils all peoples,

The web that is woven over all nations;  
he will destroy death forever.

The Lord GOD 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!”

6.

Lamentations 3:17-26

*It is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the  
LORD.*

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 thought of my homeless poverty  
is wormwood and gall;

Remembering it over and over  
leaves my soul downcast within me.

But I will call this to mind,  
as my reason to have hope:

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.

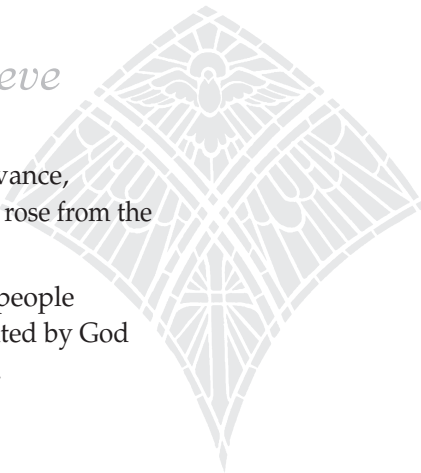
7.

Daniel 12:1-3

*Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth  
shall awake.*

In those days, I, Daniel, mourned  
and heard this word of the Lord:

At that time there shall arise  
Michael, the great prince,  
guardian of your people;



It shall be a time unsurpassed in distress  
since nations began until that time.

At that time your people shall escape,  
everyone who is found written in the book.

Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall  
awake;

Some shall live forever,  
others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace.

But the wise shall shine brightly  
like the splendor of the firmament,

And those who lead the many to justice  
shall be like the stars forever.

## ***Reading I From The New Testament During The Season Of Easter***

1.

Acts 10:34-43 or 10:34-36, 42-43

*He is the one appointed by God as judge of the living  
and the dead.*

Peter proceeded to speak, saying:

"In truth, I see that God shows no partiality.

Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts  
uprightly  
is acceptable to him.

You know the word that he sent to the children of  
Israel

as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ,  
who is Lord of all,

[what has happened all over Judea,  
beginning in Galilee after the baptism  
that John preached,

how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth  
with the Holy Spirit and power.

He went about doing good  
and healing all those oppressed by the Devil,  
for God was with him.

We are witnesses of all that he did  
both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.

They put him to death by hanging him on a tree.

This man God raised on the third day and granted  
that he be visible,  
not to all the people, but to us,

the witnesses chosen by God in advance,  
who ate and drank with him after he rose from the  
dead.]

He commissioned us to preach to the people  
and testify that he is the one appointed by God  
as judge of the living and the dead.

To him all the prophets bear witness,  
that everyone who believes in him  
will receive forgiveness of sins through his  
name."

2.

Revelation 14:13

*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.*

I, John, 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."

3.

Revelation 20:11-21:1

*The dead were judged according to their deeds.*

I, John, saw a large white throne and the one who  
was sitting on it.

The earth and the sky fled from his presence  
and there was no place for them.

I saw the dead, the great and the lowly, standing  
before the throne,  
and scrolls were opened.

Then another scroll was opened, the book of life.

The dead were judged according to their deeds,  
by what was written in the scrolls.

The sea gave up its dead;  
then Death and Hades gave up their dead.

All the dead were judged according to their deeds.

Then Death and Hades were thrown into the pool of  
fire.

(This pool of fire is the second death.)

Anyone whose name was not found written in the  
book of life  
was thrown into the pool of fire.



## *We Remember, We Believe*

Then 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.

4.

Revelation 21:1-5a, 6b-7  
*There shall be no more death.*

I, John, 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."

### ***Reading II From The New Testament***

*(Choose one to be read by an assigned reader.)*

1.

Romans 5:5-11

*Since we are now justified by his Blood, we will be  
saved through him from the wrath.*

Brothers and sisters:

Hope does not disappoint,  
because the love of God has been poured out  
into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit who has been  
given to us.

For Christ, while we were still helpless,  
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 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.

2.

Romans 5:17-21

*Where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more.*

Brothers and sisters:

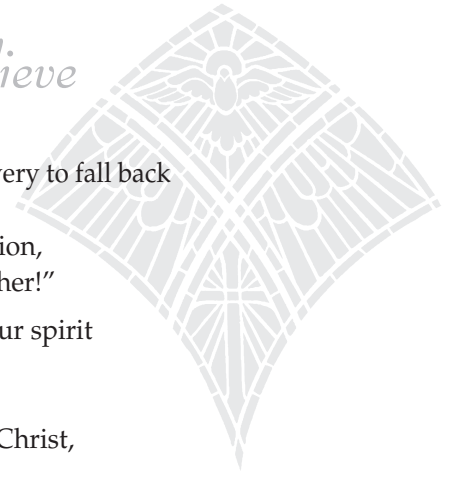
If, by the transgression of the one,  
death came to reign through that one,  
how much more will those who receive the  
abundance of grace  
and of the gift of justification  
come to reign in life through the one Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, just as through one transgression  
condemnation came upon all,  
so, through one righteous act,  
acquittal and life came to all.

For just as through the disobedience of the one man  
the many were made sinners,



## *We Remember, We Believe*



so through the obedience of the one  
the many will be made righteous.

The law entered in so that transgression  
might increase

but, where sin increased, grace overflowed all  
the more, so that,  
as sin reigned in death,  
grace also might reign through justification  
for eternal life  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

3.

Romans 6:3-9 or 6:3-4, 8-9

*We too might live in newness of life.*

Brothers and sisters:

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.

[For if we have grown into union with him  
through a death like his,  
we shall also be united with him in the  
resurrection.

We know that our old self was crucified with him,  
so that our sinful body might be  
done away with,  
that we might no longer be in slavery to sin.

For a dead person has been absolved from sin.]

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.

4.

Romans 8:14-23

*We also groan within ourselves as we wait for  
adoption, the redemption of our bodies.*

Brothers and sisters:

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons  
of God.

For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back  
into fear,

but you received a spirit of adoption,  
through which we cry, "Abba, Father!"

The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit  
that we are children of God,  
and if children, then heirs,  
heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ,  
if only we suffer with him  
so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are  
as nothing  
compared with the glory to be revealed for us.

For creation awaits with eager expectation  
the revelation of the children of God;  
for creation was made subject to futility,  
not of its own accord but because of the one who  
subjected it,  
in hope that creation itself  
would be set free from slavery to corruption  
and share in the glorious freedom of the children  
of God.

We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains  
even until now;  
and not only that, but we ourselves,  
who have the firstfruits of the Spirit,  
we also groan within ourselves  
as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our  
bodies.

5.

Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39

*What will separate us from the love of Christ?*

Brothers and sisters:

If God is for us, who can be against us?

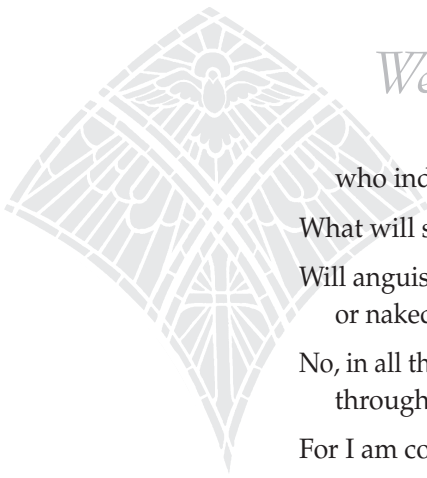
He did not spare his own Son  
but handed him over for us all,  
will he not also give us everything else along with  
him?

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,



## *We Remember, We Believe*

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 overwhelmingly  
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.

6.

Romans 14:7-9, 10c-12

*Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.*

Brothers and sisters:

No one lives for oneself,  
and no one dies for oneself.

For if we live, we live for the Lord,  
and if we die, we die for the Lord;  
so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

For this is why Christ died and came to life,  
that he might be Lord of both the dead and the  
living.

Why then do you judge your brother?

Or you, why do you look down on your brother?

For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of  
God;

for it is written:

*As I live, says the Lord, every knee  
shall bend before me,  
and every tongue shall give praise to God.*

So then each of us shall give an accounting of  
himself to God.

7.

1 Corinthians 15:20-28 or 15:20-23

*So too in Christ shall all be brought to life.*

Brothers and sisters:

Christ has been raised from the dead,  
the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

For since death came through a man,  
the resurrection of the dead came also through  
man.

For just as in Adam all die,  
so too in Christ shall all be brought to life,  
but each one in proper order:  
Christ the firstfruits;  
then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ;  
[then comes the end,  
when he hands over the Kingdom to his God and  
Father.

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies  
under his feet.

The last enemy to be destroyed is death,  
for "he subjected everything under his feet."

But when it says that everything has been subjected,  
it is clear that it excludes the one who subjected  
everything to him.

When everything is subjected to him,  
then the Son himself will also be subjected  
to the one who subjected everything to him,  
so that God may be all in all.]

8.

1 Corinthians 15:51-57

*Death is swallowed up in victory.*

Brothers and sisters:

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 this which is corruptible clothes itself  
with incorruptibility  
and this which is mortal clothes itself  
with immortality,  
then the word that is written shall come about:

## *We Remember, We Believe*

*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.

9.

2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1

*What is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is  
eternal.*

Brothers and sisters:

Knowing that the One who raised the Lord Jesus  
will raise us also with Jesus  
and place us with you in his presence.

Everything indeed is for you,  
so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more  
and more people  
may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the  
glory of God.

Therefore, we are not discouraged;  
rather, although our outer self is wasting away,  
our inner self is being renewed day by day.

For this momentary light affliction  
is producing for us an eternal weight of glory  
beyond all comparison,  
as we look not to what is seen but to what is  
unseen;  
for what is seen is transitory,  
but what is unseen is eternal.

For 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.

10.

2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10

*We have a building from God, eternal in heaven.*

Brothers and sisters:

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.

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 may receive recompense,  
according to what he did in the body, whether  
good or evil.

11.

Philippians 3:20-21

*He will change our lowly bodies to conform to his  
glory.*

Brothers and sisters:

Our citizenship is in heaven,  
and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus  
Christ.

He will change our lowly body  
to conform with his glorified Body  
by the power that enables him also  
to bring all things into subjection to himself.

12.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

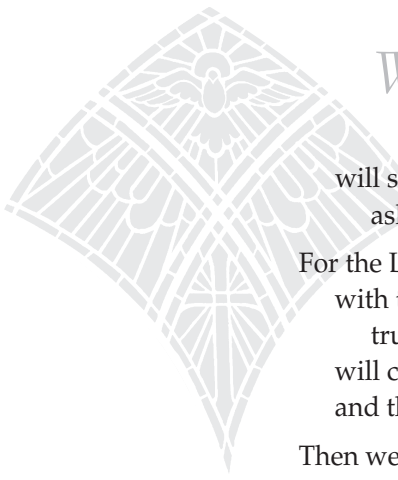
*Thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

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,





## *We Remember, We Believe*

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.

13.

2 Timothy 2:8-13

*If we have died with him we shall also live with him.*

Beloved:

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a  
descendant of David:  
such is my Gospel, for which I am suffering,  
even to the point of chains, like a criminal.

But the word of God is not chained.

Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of  
those who are chosen,  
so that they too may obtain the salvation that  
is in Christ Jesus,  
together with eternal glory.

This saying is trustworthy:

If we have died with him  
we shall also live with him;  
if we persevere  
we shall also reign with him.  
But if we deny him  
he will deny us.  
If we are unfaithful  
he remains faithful,  
for he cannot deny himself.

14.

1 John 3:1-2

*We shall see him as he is.*

Beloved:

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.

15.

1 John 3:14-16

*We know that we have passed from death to life  
because we love our brothers.*

Beloved:

We know that we have passed from death to life  
because we love our brothers.

Whoever does not love remains in death.

Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer,  
and you know that no murderer has eternal life  
remaining in him.

The way we came to know love  
was that he laid down his life for us;  
so we ought to lay down our lives for our  
brothers.

### ***Gospel***

*(Choose one to be read by the priest.)*

1.

Matthew 5:1-12a

*Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in  
heaven.*

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the  
mountain,  
and after he had sat down, his disciples came  
to him.

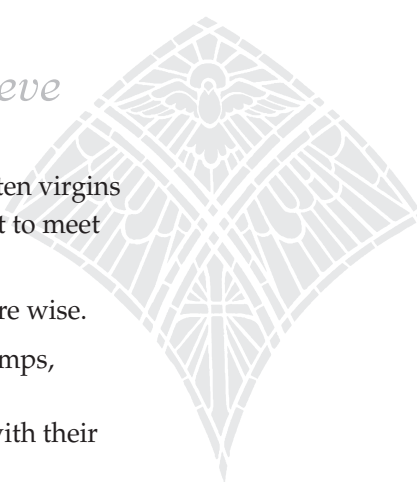
He began to teach them, saying:

"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 will 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."

2.

Matthew 11:25-30

*Come to me and I will give you rest.*

At that time Jesus answered:

"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."

3.

Matthew 25:1-13

*Behold the bridegroom! Come out to him!*

Jesus told his disciples this parable:

"The Kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins  
who took their lamps and went out to meet  
the bridegroom.

Five of them were foolish and five were wise.

The foolish ones, when taking their lamps,  
brought no oil with them,  
but the wise brought flasks of oil with their  
lamps.

Since the bridegroom was long delayed,  
they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

At midnight, there was a cry,  
'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet  
him!'

Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their  
lamps.

The foolish ones said to the wise,  
'Give us some of your oil,  
for our lamps are going out.'

But the wise ones replied,  
'No, for there may not be enough for us and you.

Go instead to the merchants and buy some for  
yourselves.'

While they went off to buy it,  
the bridegroom came  
and those who were ready went into the wedding  
feast with him.

Then the door was locked.

Afterwards the other virgins came and said,  
'Lord, Lord, open the door for us!'

But he said in reply,  
'Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.'

Therefore, stay awake,  
for you know neither the day nor the hour."

4.

Matthew 25:31-46

*Come, you who are blessed by my Father.*

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.

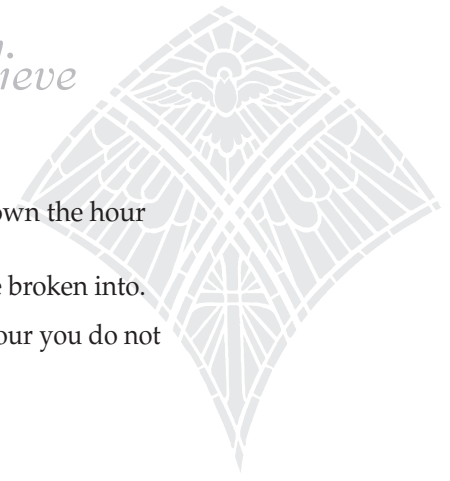




## *We Remember, We Believe*

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 brothers of mine, you did for  
me.’  
Then he will say to those on his left,  
‘Depart from me, you accursed,  
into the eternal fire prepared for the Devil and his  
angels.  
For I was hungry and you gave me no food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me no drink,  
a stranger and you gave me no welcome,  
naked and you gave me no clothing,  
ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.’  
Then they will answer and say,  
‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty  
or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison,  
and not minister to your needs?’  
He will answer them, ‘Amen, I say to you,  
what you did not do for one of these least ones,  
you did not do for me.’  
And these will go off to eternal punishment,  
but the righteous to eternal life.”

5.  
Mark 15:33-39; 16:1-6 or 15:33-39  
*Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.*  
At noon darkness came over the whole land  
until three in the afternoon.  
And at three o’clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice,  
“*Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?*”  
which is translated,  
“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”  
Some of the bystanders who heard it said,  
“Look, he is calling Elijah.”  
One of them ran, soaked a sponge with wine, put it  
on a reed,  
and gave it to him to drink, saying,  
“Wait, let us see if Elijah comes to take him  
down.”  
Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.  
The veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to  
bottom.  
When the centurion who stood facing him  
saw how he breathed his last he said,  
“Truly this man was the Son of God!”  
[When the sabbath was over,  
Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James,  
and Salome  
bought spices so that they might go and  
anoint him.  
Very early when the sun had risen,  
on the first day of the week, they came to the  
tomb.  
They were saying to one another,  
“Who will roll back the stone for us  
from the entrance to the tomb?”  
When they looked up,  
they saw that the stone had been rolled back;  
it was very large.  
On entering the tomb they saw a young man  
sitting on the right side, clothed in a white robe,  
and they were utterly amazed.  
He said to them, “Do not be amazed!  
You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified.  
He has been raised; he is not here.  
Behold the place where they laid him.”]



6.

Luke 7:11-17

*Young man, I tell you, arise!*

Jesus journeyed to a city called Nain,  
and his disciples and a large crowd accompanied  
him.

As he drew near to the gate of the city,  
a man who had died was being carried out,  
the only son of his mother, and she was a widow.

A large crowd from the city was with her.

When the Lord saw her,  
he was moved with pity for her and said to her,  
"Do not weep."

He stepped forward and touched the coffin;  
at this the bearers halted,  
and he said, "Young man, I tell you, arise!"

The dead man sat up and began to speak,  
and Jesus gave him to his mother.

Fear seized them all, and they glorified God,  
exclaiming,  
"A great prophet has arisen in our midst,"  
and "God has visited his people."

This report about him spread through the whole of  
Judea  
and in all the surrounding region.

7.

Luke 12:35-40

*You also must be prepared.*

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Gird your loins and light your lamps  
and be like servants who await their master's  
return from a wedding,  
ready to open immediately when he comes and  
knocks.

Blessed are those servants  
whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival.

Amen, I say to you, he will gird himself,  
have them recline at table, and proceed to wait on  
them.

And should he come in the second or third watch  
and find them prepared in this way,  
blessed are those servants.

Be sure of this:

if the master of the house had known the hour  
when the thief was coming,  
he would not have let his house be broken into.

You also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not  
expect,  
the Son of Man will come."

8.

Luke 23:33, 39-43

*Today you will be with me in Paradise.*

When the soldiers came to the place called the Skull,  
they crucified Jesus and the criminals there,  
one on his right, the other on his left.

Now one of the criminals hanging there  
reviled Jesus, saying,  
"Are you not the Christ?  
Save yourself and us."

The other man, however, rebuking him, said in reply,  
"Have you no fear of God,  
for you are subject to the same condemnation?

And indeed, we have been condemned justly,  
for the sentence we received corresponds to our  
crimes,  
but this man has done nothing criminal."

Then he said,

"Jesus, remember me when you come into your  
Kingdom."

He replied to him,

"Amen, I say to you,  
today you will be with me in Paradise."

9.

Luke 23:44-46, 50, 52-53; 24:1-6a or 23:44-46, 50, 52-53  
*Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.*

It was about noon and darkness came over the whole  
land  
until three in the afternoon  
because of an eclipse of the sun.

Then the veil of the temple was torn down the  
middle.

Jesus cried out in a loud voice,  
"Father, into your hands I commend my spirit";  
and when he had said this he breathed his last.



## *We Remember, We Believe*

Now there was a virtuous and righteous man named Joseph who,  
though he was a member of the council,  
went to Pilate and asked for the Body of Jesus.

After he had taken the Body down,  
he wrapped it in a linen cloth  
and laid him in a rock-hewn tomb  
in which no one had yet been buried.

[At daybreak on the first day of the week  
the women took the spices they had prepared  
and went to the tomb.

They found the stone rolled away from the tomb;  
but when they entered,  
they did not find the Body of the Lord Jesus.

While they were puzzling over this, behold,  
two men in dazzling garments appeared to them.

They were terrified and bowed their faces to the  
ground.

They said to them,  
“Why do you seek the living one among  
the dead?

He is not here, but he has been raised.”]

10.

Luke 24:13-35 or 24:13-16, 28-35

*Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer  
these things and enter into his glory?*

That very day, the first day of the week,  
two of the disciples of Jesus were going  
to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from  
Jerusalem,

and they were conversing about all the things that  
had occurred.

And it happened that while they were conversing and  
debating,

Jesus himself drew near and walked with them,  
but their eyes were prevented from recognizing  
him.

[He asked them,  
“What are you discussing as you walk along?”

They stopped, looking downcast.

One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply,

“Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem  
who does not know of the things  
that have taken place there in these days?”

And he replied to them, “What sort of things?”

They said to him,

“The things that happened to Jesus the Nazarene,  
who was a prophet mighty in deed and word  
before God and all the people,  
how our chief priests and rulers both handed him  
over

to a sentence of death and crucified him.

But we were hoping that he would be the one to  
redeem Israel;

and besides all this,

it is now the third day since this took place.

Some women from our group, however, have  
astounded us:

they were at the tomb early in the morning  
and did not find his Body;

they came back and reported

that they had indeed seen a vision of angels  
who announced that he was alive.

Then some of those with us went to the tomb  
and found things just as the women had  
described,

but him they did not see.”

And he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are!

How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets  
spoke!

Was it not necessary that the Christ should  
suffer these things  
and enter into his glory?”

Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets,  
Jesus interpreted to them what referred to him  
in all the Scriptures.]

As they approached the village to which they were  
going,

Jesus gave the impression that he was going on  
farther.

But they urged him, “Stay with us,  
for it is nearly evening and the day is almost  
over.”



So he went in to stay with them.

And it happened that, while he was with them at  
table,  
he took bread, said the blessing,  
broke it, and gave it to them.

With that their eyes were opened and they recognized  
him,  
but he vanished from their sight.

Then they said to each other,  
"Were not our hearts burning within us  
while he spoke to us on the way and opened the  
Scriptures to us?"

So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem  
where they found gathered together  
the Eleven and those with them, who were saying,  
"The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared  
to Simon!"

Then the two recounted  
what had taken place on the way  
and how he was made known to them in the  
breaking of the bread.

11.

John 5:24-29

*Whoever hears my word and believes has passed  
from death to life.*

Jesus answered the Jews and said to them:

"Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever hears my word  
and believes in the one who sent me  
has eternal life and will not come to  
condemnation,  
but has passed from death to life.

Amen, amen, I say to you, the hour is coming and is  
now here  
when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of  
God,  
and those who hear will live.

For just as the Father has life in himself,  
so also he gave to the Son the possession of life in  
himself.

And he gave him power to exercise judgment,  
because he is the Son of Man.

Do not be amazed at this,  
because the hour is coming in which all who are

in the tombs  
will hear his voice and will come out  
those who have done good deeds  
to the resurrection of life,  
but those who have done wicked deeds  
to the resurrection of condemnation."

12.

John 6:37-40

*Everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may  
have eternal life and I shall raise him on the last day*

Jesus said to the crowds:

"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."

13.

John 6:51-59

*Whoever eats this bread will live forever,  
and I will raise them up on the last day.*

Jesus said to the crowds:

"I am the living bread that came down from heaven;  
whoever eats this bread will live forever;  
and the bread that I will give is my Flesh  
for the life of the world."

The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying,  
"How can this man give us his Flesh to eat?"

Jesus said to them,

"Amen, amen, I say to you,  
unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and  
drink his Blood,  
you do not have life within you.



## *We Remember, We Believe*

Whoever eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood  
has eternal life,  
and I will raise him on the last day.

For my Flesh is true food,  
and my Blood is true drink.

Whoever eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood  
remains in me and I in him.

Just as the living Father sent me  
and I have life because of the Father,  
so also the one who feeds on me  
will have life because of me.

This is the bread that came down from heaven.

Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died,  
whoever eats this bread will live forever."

14.

John 11:17-27 or 11:21-27

*I am the resurrection and the life.*

[When Jesus arrived in Bethany, he found that  
Lazarus  
had already been in the tomb for four days.

Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two  
miles away.

Many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary  
to comfort them about their brother.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming,  
she went to meet him;  
but Mary sat at home.]

Martha said to Jesus,  
"Lord, if you had been here,  
my brother would not have died.

But even now I know that whatever you ask of God,  
God will give you."

Jesus said to her,  
"Your brother will rise."

Martha said to him,  
"I know he will rise,  
in the resurrection on the last day."

Jesus told her,  
"I am the resurrection and the life;  
whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live,  
and everyone who lives and believes in me will  
never die.

Do you believe this?"

She said to him, "Yes, Lord.

I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the  
Son of God,  
the one who is coming into the world."

15.

John 11:32-45

*Lazarus, come out!*

When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him,  
she fell at his feet and said to him,  
"Lord, if you had been here,  
my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had  
come with her weeping,  
he became perturbed and deeply troubled, and  
said,

"Where have you laid him?"

They said to him, "Sir, come and see."

And Jesus wept.

So the Jews said, "See how he loved him."

But some of them said,

"Could not the one who opened the eyes of the  
blind man  
have done something so that this man would not  
have died?"

So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb.

It was a cave, and a stone lay across it.

Jesus said, "Take away the stone."

Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him,  
"Lord, by now there will be a stench;  
he has been dead for four days."

Jesus said to her,  
"Did I not tell you that if you believe  
you will see the glory of God?"

So they took away the stone.

And Jesus raised his eyes and said,  
"Father, I thank you for hearing me.

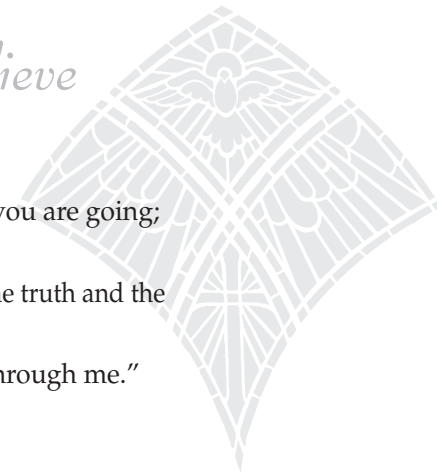
I know that you always hear me;  
but because of the crowd here I have said this,  
that they may believe that you sent me."

And when he had said this,  
he cried out in a loud voice,  
"Lazarus, come out!"

The dead man came out,  
tied hand and foot with burial bands,  
and his face was wrapped in a cloth.



## *We Remember, We Believe*



So Jesus said to the crowd,  
"Untie him and let him go."

Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary  
and seen what he had done began to believe in  
him.

16.  
John 12:23-28 or 12:23-26  
*If it dies, it produces much fruit.*

Jesus said to 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 will lose 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.

["I am troubled now. Yet what should I say?

'Father, save me from this hour'?

But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour.

Father, glorify your name."

Then a voice came from heaven,

"I have glorified it and will glorify it again."]

17

John 14:1-6

*In my Father's house there are many dwellings.*

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."

18.

John 17:24-26

*I wish that where I am they also may be with me.*

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:

"Father, those whom you gave me are your gift to  
me.

I wish that where I am they also may be with me,  
that they may see my glory that you gave me,  
because you loved me before the foundation of  
the world.

Righteous Father, the world also does not know you,  
but I know you, and they know that you sent me.

I made known to them your name and I will make it  
known,

that the love with which you loved me  
may be in them and I in them."

19.

John 19:17-18, 25-39

*And bowing his head he handed over his Spirit.*

So they took Jesus, and, carrying the cross himself,  
he went out to what is called the Place of the  
Skull,  
in Hebrew, Golgotha.

There they crucified him, and with him two others,  
one on either side, with Jesus in the middle.

Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother  
and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas,  
and Mary Magdalene.

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he  
loved,  
he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your  
son."

Then he said to the disciple,

"Behold, your mother."

And from that hour the disciple took her into his  
home.

After this, aware that everything was now finished,  
in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled,



## *We Remember, We Believe*

Jesus said, "I thirst."

There was a vessel filled with common wine.

So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of  
hyssop  
and put it up to his mouth.

When Jesus had taken the wine, he said,  
"It is finished."

And bowing his head, he handed over the Spirit.

Now since it was preparation day,  
in order that the bodies might not remain on the  
cross on the sabbath,  
for the sabbath day of that week was a solemn  
one,

the Jews asked Pilate that their legs be broken  
and they be taken down.

So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first  
and then of the other one who was crucified with  
Jesus.

But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was  
already dead,  
they did not break his legs,  
but one soldier thrust his lance into his side,  
and immediately Blood and water flowed out.

An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true;  
he knows that he is speaking the truth,  
so that you also may come to believe.

For this happened so that the Scripture passage might  
be fulfilled:

*Not a bone of it will be broken.*

And again another passage says:

*They will look upon him whom they have pierced.*

After this, Joseph of Arimathea,  
secretly a disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews,  
asked Pilate if he could remove the Body of  
Jesus.

And Pilate permitted it.

So he came and took his Body.

Nicodemus, the one who had first come to him  
at night,  
also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes  
weighing about one hundred pounds.

### ***Suggested Repertoire for the Order of Christian Funerals***

Below is a sampling of music appropriate for the celebration of the Order of Christian Funerals. This music would be suitable for the Vigil Service, the Church Service, or the Committal Service. During the Church Service the responsorial psalm, Gospel acclamation and the acclamations of the eucharistic prayer are normally sung. The parish music ministry may select settings of these acclamations from the common repertoire of the community.

### ***Hymns / Songs***

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus – HYFRYDOL

Amazing Grace – NEW BRITAIN

As One Unknown – Cyprian Consiglio

Be Not Afraid – Bob Dufford

Crown Him with Many Crowns – DIADEMATA

Day Is Done – AR HYD Y NOS

Eat This Bread – Jacques Berthier

For All the Saints – SINE NOMINE

Go, Silent Friend – LONDONDERRY AIR

I Am the Bread of Life – Suzanne Toolan, SM

Jerusalem, My Happy Home –  
LAND OF REST

Lead Me, Guide Me – Doris M. Akers

Lift High the Cross – CRUCIFER

Lord of All Hopefulness – SLANE

O Happy Day – Edward F. Rimbault

O God Our Help In Ages Past – ST. ANNE

On Eagle's Wings – Michael Joncas

Shall We Gather At The River – Robert Lowry

Jesus Wine of Peace – David Haas

Supper of the Lord – Laurence Rosania

Take and Eat – Michael Joncas

Steal Away to Jesus – African-American  
Spiritual

We Have Been Told – David Haas

The Hand of God Shall Hold You  
– Marty Haugen



The Lord is My Light – Lillian Bouknight  
There Is A Place – Liam Lawton (GIA)  
We Shall Rise Again – Jeremy Young  
We Walk By Faith – Marty Haugen  
You Are Mine – David Haas

### ***Responsorial Psalm settings***

Psalm 23: I Shall Live in the House of the Lord  
– James E. Moore, Jr. (GIA)

Psalm 23: My Shepherd Is the Lord  
– Joseph Gelineau, SJ

Psalm 23: Shepherd Me O God  
– Marty Haugen (GIA)

Psalm 23: The Lord Is My Shepherd  
– Owen Alstott (OCP)

Psalm 27: The Lord is My Light and My  
Salvation – David Haas

Psalm 62: Rest In God Alone – Robert Batastini

Psalm 63: My Soul is Thirsting – Michael Joncas

Psalm 84: Happy Are They Who Dwell In Your  
House – Thomas Porter

Psalm 103: The Lord is Kind and Merciful –  
Marty Haugen

Psalm 116: The Name of God – David Haas

Psalm 121: Our Help Comes From the Lord –  
Michael Joncas

### ***Service Music (Funeral Mass)***

Celtic Song of Farewell – LONDONDERRY  
AIR (WLP)

I Know That My Redeemer Lives – Howard  
Hughes, SM

I Know That My Redeemer Lives – Scott Soper

May the Angels Lead You Into Paradise –  
Howard Hughes, SM

May Saints and Angels Lead You On –  
TALLIS' CANON

Saints of God – Philip Duffy

Saints of God – Richard Proulx

Song of Farewell – Ernest Sands (OCP)

Song of Farewell – OLD HUNDREDTH (OCP)

## ***Seasonal Supplement***

### ***Advent***

Psalm 25: To You O Lord I Lift My Soul –  
Marty Haugen

Psalm 25: To You O Lord – Stephen Pishner  
Creator of the Stars of Night – CONDITOR  
ALME SIDERUM

My Soul in Stillness Waits – Marty Haugen

Soon and Very Soon – Andrae Crouch

The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns –  
MORNING SONG

Wait for the Lord – Jacques Berthier

### ***Christmas***

Psalm 98: All the Ends of the Earth  
– David Haas

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear – CAROL

O Little Town of Bethlehem – ST. LOUIS

Of the Father's Love Begotten – DIVINUM  
MYSTERIUM

We Three Kings of Orient Are – KINGS OF  
ORIENT

### ***Lent***

Psalm 130: With the Lord There is Mercy –  
Marty Haugen

Psalm 130: With the Lord There is Mercy –  
Michael Joncas

From Ashes to the Living Font – ST. FLAVIAN

Have Mercy On Us Lord – ATTENDE DOMINE

Jerusalem, My Destiny – Rory Cooney

Jesus Remember Me – Jacques Berthier

Remember Your Love – Darryl Ducote

Turn to the Living God – Lori True (GIA)

### ***Easter***

Alleluia! Alleluia! Let the Holy Anthem Rise  
– HOLY ANTHEM

Alleluia! The Strife Is O'er – VICTORY

Christ the Lord Is Risen Today – LLANFAIR

Easter Alleluia – Marty Haugen

Jesus Christ Is Risen Today – EASTER HYMN

Jesus Is Risen – LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Sing With All the Saints In Glory – ODE TO JOY



# PRACTICAL PREPARATION

## **Details to Address**

Prepare a list of family and friends to be notified.

- † Names
- † Relationship
- † Addresses
- † Telephone
- † Email

## **Gather your vital statistics**

- † Legal name
- † Address
- † Date of birth
- † Place of birth
- † Occupation  
(or former occupation)
  - Kind of business or industry
- † Education completed and degrees received
  - Names of educational institutions
- † Dates of military service
  - Branch of military service
  - Military service number
  - Location of discharge papers
  - Names of wars in which you participated
- † Marital status
  - Legal name of spouse
  - Your mother's maiden name
  - Her place of birth
  - Your father's name
  - His place of birth

## **Decide on the funeral instructions Catholic Cemetery**

- † Vigil Service
  - Readings and Songs  
(See pages 53, 68)

- † Funeral Mass
  - Readings and Songs  
(See pages 53, 68)
- † Committal Service
  - Readings and Songs  
(See pages 53, 68)

## **Type of service**

- † Traditional or cremation?
- † Graveside, church or chapel?
- † Military?
- † Active pallbearers' names
  - Addresses
  - Telephone numbers

## **Name of funeral home**

- † Address
- † Telephone number
- † Type of casket
  - Wood or metal?
- † Viewing (visitation)
  - Open or closed casket?
  - Day and /or Evening?
  - Number of Days  
(Viewing)
- † Clothing
  - Your own or new?
- † Newspaper notice
- † Notice to organizations to which you belong
- † Memorial contributions
- † Flowers/preferred florist
- † Clergy
- † Special instructions
  - Jewelry, music, flowers, hairdresser

## **Decide on the burial instructions Catholic Cemetery**

- † Committal Service
  - Readings and Songs  
(See pages 53, 68)
- † Type of burial
- † Ground, mausoleum, crypt or other
- † Cemetery
  - Name

- Lot, space number, section
- Vault (may be required by cemetery)
  - Concrete, steel or other?

## **List your documents and personal papers**

- † Bank accounts
- † Bank names
- † Account numbers and types of accounts
- † Safe deposit box
  - Location
  - Location of keys
- † Important document locations
  - Birth certificate
  - Social Security
  - Children's birth certificates
  - Marriage certificates
- † Deeds and titles
- † Mortgages and notes
- † Will and/or living will
- † Medical power of attorney
- † Military discharge
- † Income tax records

## **Make or update your will**

- † Preserve your will  
(See page 72)
  - Name of executor
  - Address
  - Telephone number
  - Probation of your will
- † Legal assistance
  - Name
  - Telephone number

## **Provide your insurance instructions**

- Insurance companies
- Policy numbers
- Amounts
- Purposes



### ***Your Will<sup>1</sup>***

A will is a document used to distribute a deceased person's property. There are two types of property, real property and personal property. Real property is real estate. All other property is personal property (cash, stocks, bank accounts, furniture, cars, etc.). However, a will may not apply to all of a deceased person's property. For instance, it usually does not apply to insurance benefits, nor a retirement plan when a beneficiary has been named. And it may not even apply to a deceased person's interest in joint property if the property is jointly held "by the entirety" (a legal term).

A will can also be used to appoint a legal guardian for one's minor children. Without such appointment, a court will decide who will care for the deceased's child in the event that the other parent is deceased, unavailable or unfit. One should consider naming an alternate guardian in the will in case the first choice cannot or will not accept responsibility for the minor's care.

All persons over 18 years of age should have a will. You should make a will as soon as possible, because no one can plan for a sudden illness or accident. If you are a parent, you should have a will even if you do not have many assets. The reason is so that you can appoint a guardian for your minor children.

The following should be noted when making a will:

- The testator (i.e. person making the will) must be clearly identified in the will.
- The testator should revoke all prior wills.
- The testator should be at least 18 years old and of sound mind and body at the time the will is signed.
- The testator should sign and date the will.
- The testator's signature should generally be witnessed by at least two adults, who also sign but who are not beneficiaries under the will.
- The testator should state his/her wishes clearly.

Many "homemade" wills are declared invalid by the courts. State laws set forth the specific requirements for wills. Therefore, preparation and execution of a will should be handled in most cases by a competent attorney.

Often wills are prepared to obtain maximum benefits under the tax laws. Wills should be reviewed every few years, since there might be

changed circumstances, i.e. adopted children, etc. Also, if you change residence to a different state after you have executed your will, it is always a good idea to have your will reviewed by an attorney in the state of your new residence.

**How are the intentions expressed in my will carried out upon my death?** The court process in which a deceased person's intentions in the will are carried out is called "probate." During probate, the executor of your will (a person you designate) collects your property, pays all your debts and taxes, and distributes the property according to your will.

**Should I include funeral instructions in my will?** No. It is usually better to leave separate instructions and tell your relatives or close friends where to find the instructions in case of death.

### ***Planned Gifts***

As Christian Stewards, we have an obligation to pass on to the next generation, the Catholic Faith and Life we have received. Making a Planned Gift is a way to say thank you to God for the many blessings He has bestowed upon us. Planned giving can enable the Church to continue the mission entrusted to it by Christ. It can continue to witness the generosity one has shown through life.

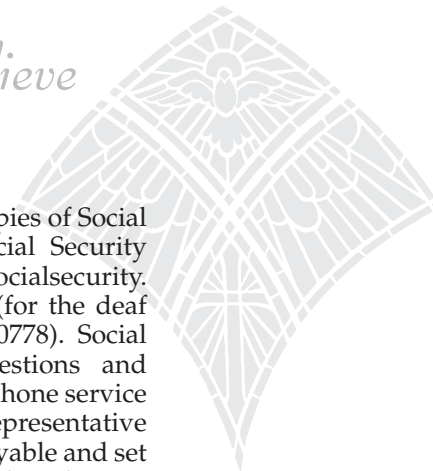
The most common planned gift is a bequest in a will. Bequests can be made to a specific parish or to a specific endowment of the Archdiocese of Newark. Another frequently used planned gift is the Archdiocesan Charitable Gift Annuity. This annuity provides immediate tax deductions, lifetime income and a gift to the church. Retained Life Estates, Charitable Remainder Trusts and Charitable Lead Trusts also provide alternative methods of giving, based on the size and complexity of an estate. Contact an attorney for the best method for your estate. The Archdiocesan Planned Giving Office (973) 497-4584, can also provide information and assistance.

### ***Social Security<sup>2</sup>***

Social Security should be notified as soon as possible when a person dies. In most cases, the funeral director will report the person's death to Social Security. You will need to furnish the funeral director with the deceased's Social Security number so he or she can make the report.

Some of the deceased's family members may be able to receive Social Security benefits if the deceased person worked long enough under Social

1. This information is provided solely as a public service. The Archdiocese of Newark and Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Newark disclaim all liability for the accuracy and substance of the information contained herein. You should consult your own attorney regarding material noted herein.



Security to quality for benefits. You should get in touch with Social Security as soon as you can to make sure the family receives all of the benefits to which it may be entitled. Please read "Contacting Social Security" below.

Benefits which may be available include a one-time payment of \$255 to the surviving spouse if he or she was living with the deceased; or, if living apart, was receiving certain Social Security benefits based on the deceased's record. If there is no surviving spouse, the payment may be made to a child who is eligible for benefits based on the deceased's record in the month of death.

Certain family members may be eligible to receive monthly benefits, including:

- A widow or widower age 60 or older (age 50 or older if disabled);
- A surviving spouse at any age who is caring for the deceased's child who is under age 16 or disabled;
- An unmarried child of the deceased who is:
  - Younger than age 18 (or age 18 or 19 if he or she is a full-time student in an elementary or secondary school); or
  - Age 18 or older with a disability that began before age 22;
- Parents, age 62 or older, who were dependent on the deceased for at least half of their support; and
- A surviving divorced spouse, under certain circumstances.

If the deceased was receiving Social Security benefits, you must return the benefit received for the month of death and any later months. For example, if the person dies in July, you must return the benefit paid in July and any month thereafter. If benefits were paid by direct deposit, contact the bank or other financial institution, and request that any funds received for the month of death or later be returned to Social Security. If the benefits were paid by check, do not cash checks received for the month in which the person dies or later. Return the checks to Social Security as soon as possible. However, eligible family members may be able to receive death benefits for the month in which the beneficiary died.

## **Contacting Social Security**

For more information and to find copies of Social Security publications, visit the Social Security Administration's website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or call toll-free (800) 772-1213 (for the deaf or hard of hearing, call (800) 325-0778). Social Security can answer specific questions and provide information by automated phone service 24 hours a day. A Social Security representative can tell you what benefits may be payable and set up an appointment, if necessary, to file a claim.

## **Benefits for Veterans<sup>3</sup>**

### **What Are VA Burial Allowances?**

VA burial allowances are partial reimbursements of an eligible veteran's burial and funeral costs. When the cause of death is not service-related, the reimbursements are generally described as two payments: (1) a burial and funeral expense allowance, and (2) a plot interment allowance.

### **Who Is Eligible?**

You may be eligible for a VA burial allowance if:

- you paid for a veteran's burial or funeral **AND**
- you have not been reimbursed by another government agency or some other source, such as the deceased veteran's employer **AND**
- the veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

***In addition, at least one of the following conditions must be met:***

- the veteran died because of a service-related disability **OR**
- the veteran was receiving VA pension or compensation at the time of death **OR**
- the veteran was entitled to receive VA pension or compensation, but decided not to reduce his/her military retirement or disability pay **OR**
- the veteran died in a VA hospital, in a nursing home under VA contract, or while in an approved state nursing home.

### **How Much Does VA Pay?**

**Service-Related Death.** VA will pay up to \$2,000 toward burial expenses for deaths on or after September 11, 2001. VA will pay up to \$1,500 for

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deaths prior to September 10, 2001. If the veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased may be reimbursed.

***Nonservice-Related Death.*** VA will pay up to \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses, and a \$300 plot-interment allowance for deaths on or after December 1, 2001. The plot-interment allowance is \$150 for deaths prior to December 1, 2001. If the death happened while the veteran was in a VA hospital or under VA contracted nursing home care, some or all of the costs for transporting the deceased's remains may be reimbursed.

### ***How Can You Apply?***

You can apply by filling out VA Form 21-530, Application for Burial Benefits. You should attach proof of the veteran's military service (DD 214), a death certificate, and copies of funeral and burial bills you have paid.

### ***Burial Flags***

Why does VA provide a Burial Flag?

The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) provides a U.S. flag at no cost, to drape the casket or accompany the urn of a deceased veteran who served honorably in the U. S. armed forces. It is furnished to honor the memory of a veteran's military service to his or her country. Section 517 of Public Law 105-261 added eligibility for former members of the Selected Reserve.

### ***Who is eligible to receive the Burial Flag?***

Generally, the flag is given to the next-of-kin as a keepsake after its use during the funeral service. When there is no next-of-kin, VA will furnish the flag to a friend making request for it. For those VA national cemeteries with an Avenue of Flags, families of veterans buried in these national cemeteries may donate the burial flags of their loved ones to be flown on patriotic holidays.

### ***How do I apply?***

You may apply for the flag by completing VA Form 21-2008, Application for United States Flag for Burial Purposes. You may get a flag at any VA regional office or U.S. Post Office. Generally, the funeral director will help you. When burial is in a national, state or military post cemetery a burial flag will be provided. To contact the VA regional office, call 1-800-827-1000.

## ***Headstones and Markers - General Information***

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) furnishes upon request, at no charge to the applicant, a government headstone or marker for the grave of any deceased eligible veteran in any cemetery around the world. For all deaths occurring before September 11, 2001, the VA may provide a headstone or marker only for graves that are not marked with a private headstone.

Spouses and dependents buried in a private cemetery are not eligible for a government-provided headstone or marker.

Flat markers in granite, marble, and bronze and upright headstones in granite and marble are available. The style chosen must be consistent with existing monuments at the place of burial. Niche markers are also available to mark columbaria used for inurnment of cremated remains.

## ***Preparing in Advance***

### ***For Burial in a VA National Cemetery***

Gravesites in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries cannot be reserved in advance; however, reservations made prior to 1962 will be honored. Families are encouraged to prepare in advance by discussing cemetery options, collecting the veteran's military information including discharge papers, and by contacting the cemetery where burial is desired.

### ***For Burial in a Private Cemetery***

We suggest that if burial will be in a private cemetery and a Government headstone or marker will be requested for the veteran's grave, that the family complete VA Form 40-1330, Application for Standard Government Headstone or Marker for Installation in a Private or State Veterans' Cemetery, in advance and place it with the veterans military discharge papers for use at the time of need.

## ***Obtaining Military Records and Medals - General Information***

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not retain veteran's military service records. Military service records are kept by the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) which is under the jurisdiction of the National Archives and Records Administration.

For More Information, Call (800) 827-1000  
<http://www.cem.va.gov>





*We Remember, We Believe*

## PREPAID FUNERALS<sup>4</sup>

### **Consumer Guidelines**

Ask a licensed funeral director what prepayment options are available.

### **Shop around**

Compare products and prices of several funeral homes. All funeral homes are required to provide detailed written price information.

### **Prefunding options**

If you choose a trust fund, other than the New Jersey Prepaid Funeral Trust Fund™, find out how and where the funds are invested. Make sure you receive confirmation of your deposit soon after the trust is opened and, thereafter, at least annually.

If you purchase an insurance policy or annuity contract understand the terms and conditions of the policy as well as who the underwriter is. Make sure you receive confirmation soon after the premium is paid, either through receipt of the policy or by a group certificate.

While a funeral home cannot be made a beneficiary of an insurance policy, there is a way to use your existing insurance policy to prefund your funeral. Ask your funeral director about assigning your policy to Sure Trust™, so payment can be made for the funeral with any remaining money given to your beneficiaries.

### **Current interest rate or yield**

Ask what the current interest rate or yield is on the plan you have selected (trust, insurance or annuity). Check your account periodically to verify that it is keeping up with inflation.

### **Understand the difference between revocable and irrevocable agreements**

A revocable agreement is refundable, while an irrevocable agreement is non-refundable. You can benefit from a revocable agreement in that you are entitled to a refund at any time. When

the agreement is part of SSI/Medicaid or General Assistance eligibility determination, irrevocable funeral arrangements are necessary and cannot be refunded.

### **Guaranteed and non-guaranteed plans**

Both plans have certain advantages, disadvantages and limitations. Understand what is or is not covered by the guarantee.

### **Before signing any paperwork, be sure to:**

Ask what will happen to any excess proceeds. Some plans refund the difference directly at the time of the service; others allow the funeral director to disburse the refund shortly thereafter.

- Have a family member or friend present during your arrangement.
- Review the contract with someone you trust.
- Ask questions. Not all prefunded plans are the same — be informed.

### **Remember to:**

Keep your paperwork in a safe place and inform others where it is stored. Do not keep it in a safe deposit box because it will be sealed at the time of death.

## **1993 Prepaid Funeral Agreement Law**

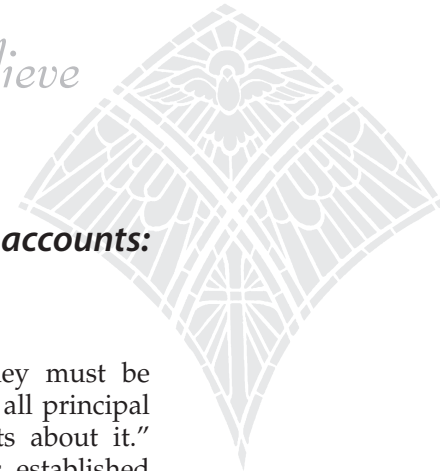
*(Effective since December 21, 1993)*

### **Summary Notes**

1. Misappropriation of prepaid funeral funds is a criminal offense.
2. Restricts pre-need sales, solicitation and promotion to licensed funeral directors.
3. Telephone or visitation “cold” calling is prohibited.
4. Sets minimum disclosure standards.
5. Requires the existence of prearrangement prior to providing a financial instrument

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for prepaying the funeral.

6. Provides that all prepaid funeral arrangements are revocable by the next of kin or other persons in charge of the disposition.
7. Regardless of the funding, and regardless of whether or not the prearranged funeral prices are guaranteed, there shall be no "unjust enrichment." Funeral directors must return to the purchaser or legal representative, or beneficiary (in the case of insurance products) any proceeds in excess of the then current retail prices.
8. Prohibits funeral directors or firms from knowingly permitting themselves to be made the beneficiary of an insurance policy in conjunction with a prepaid funeral arrangement.
9. Prohibits the advertising and promotion of "discount" that are not actual price reductions and which are based solely on an insurance policy's premium rate table.
10. Prohibits the funding of prepaid funeral arrangements through retail installment contracts or credit life insurance.
11. Requires that all funeral insurance products used meet uniform standards established by the New Jersey Department of Insurance.

## *New Jersey's Funeral Pre-Paying Law Basics*

### ***Under State Law in New Jersey: Prepaid funerals can be funded in only three ways:***

1. using a qualified trust fund account;
2. with an insurance policy (or annuity) specifically intended for this purpose; or
3. assign an existing policy.

### ***If a trust fund is used . . .***

100% of the moneys received must be placed in trust and all interest accrues to the benefit of the consumer. Investments can be made only

in FDIC insured bank deposits.

### ***There are two kinds of trust accounts: Revocable and Irrevocable***

#### ***Revocable accounts***

Revocable accounts mean that they must be refunded upon demand, including all principal and interest, "no ifs, ands or buts about it." All prepaid funeral trust accounts established in New Jersey that are not related to the SSI/Medicaid or General Assistance programs must be revocable.

#### ***Irrevocable accounts***

Irrevocable accounts mean they cannot be cancelled or refunded. In New Jersey only individuals prepaying their funerals in order to qualify for SSI/Medicaid or General Assistance may establish irrevocable accounts. Once dedicated, these funds can only be used for funeral and burial purposes. While these accounts cannot be refunded, consumers can change funeral homes.

### ***Trust accounts such as the New Jersey Prepaid Funeral Trust Fund™ offer FDIC safety and complete liquidity.***

If a newly issued insurance policy or annuity is used . . .

It must be a policy approved for this use by the New Jersey Department of Insurance.

If you assign the proceeds of an existing whole life, paid-in-full policy to Sure Trust™ . . .

The funeral director will be paid directly from the proceeds and any remaining money will be forwarded to your beneficiaries.

### ***Only licensed New Jersey funeral directors and registered mortuaries can offer prepaid funeral plans.***

In offering prepaid funeral arrangements, licensed funeral firms and funeral directors must meet all of the same standards applicable to making at-need funeral arrangements: e.g., must offer General Price lists, a full itemization, etc.

For further information contact:

New Jersey State Funeral Directors

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# Information for Relatives or Personal Representative

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle (or initial)

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_ Citizen of \_\_\_\_\_  
City State Country

Resided in \_\_\_\_\_ for (how long) \_\_\_\_\_ Years

☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed

Name of Spouse \_\_\_\_\_ (If deceased) Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date/ Anniversary \_\_\_\_\_

## Professional Statistics

Occupation and Title (or retired from) \_\_\_\_\_

Kind of Business/Employer \_\_\_\_\_ How Long \_\_\_\_\_

Father \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Date of Birth Birthplace

Mother \_\_\_\_\_  
Maiden Name Date of Birth Birthplace

## Persons to Notify: Next of Kin Other than Spouse

Name	Address	Phone	Relationship
Name	Address	Phone	Relationship
Name	Address	Phone	Relationship

## Other Persons/Organizations

Parish \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Funeral Director \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Representative/Attorney \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Address Phone

Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Address Phone

# Financial Information & Important Records or Documents

Location of Records \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

## Will

I have a will. ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Will Dated \_\_\_\_\_ Where Located \_\_\_\_\_

Executor \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Address Phone

Attorney \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Address Phone

## Banking /Financial Institution

Bank \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Address Phone

Type of Accounts Checking# \_\_\_\_\_ Savings# \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Bank \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Address Phone

Type of Accounts Checking# \_\_\_\_\_ Savings# \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Safety Deposit Box \_\_\_\_\_  
Number Key Location Bank Address Phone

## Insurance Policies

Name Policy Number Company/Union/Organization/Agent Phone

Name Policy Number Company/Union/Organization/Agent Phone

Name Policy Number Company/Union/Organization/Agent Phone

Name Policy Number Company/Union/Organization/Agent Phone

## Pension/Investments

Pension \_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Number Administrator Address Phone

401K/Plan \_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Number Administrator Address Phone

Investments \_\_\_\_\_  
Name/Number Administrator Address Phone

Name/Number Administrator Address Phone

Name/Number Administrator Address Phone

## Veteran Information

Service Identification/Serial Number \_\_\_\_\_ Rank & Branch of Service \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Veteran's Office to Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
Address Phone

Entered Service \_\_\_\_\_ Discharged \_\_\_\_\_  
Date/Place Date/Place

Wars Fought \_\_\_\_\_ Medals/Awards/Honors \_\_\_\_\_

# Information for the Funeral Home & Parish Church

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle (or initial)  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_ City State Citizen of \_\_\_\_\_ Country  
Resided in \_\_\_\_\_ for (how long) \_\_\_\_\_ Years  
☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Divorced ☐ Separated ☐ Widowed  
Name of Spouse \_\_\_\_\_ (If deceased) Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_  
Wedding Date/Anniversary \_\_\_\_\_

## Professional Statistics

Occupation and Title (or retired from) \_\_\_\_\_  
Kind of Business/Employer \_\_\_\_\_ How Long \_\_\_\_\_  
Father \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Date of Birth Birthplace  
Mother \_\_\_\_\_  
Maiden Name Date of Birth Birthplace

## Veteran Information

Service Identification/Serial Number \_\_\_\_\_ Rank & Branch of Service \_\_\_\_\_  
Location of Veteran's Office to Notify \_\_\_\_\_  
Address Phone  
Entered Service \_\_\_\_\_ Discharged \_\_\_\_\_  
Date/Place Date/Place  
Wars Fought \_\_\_\_\_ Medals/Awards/Honors \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ I would want an American flag for my family ☐ and military honors (if available)

**Floral Request** \_\_\_\_\_

**Memorial Gifts** Instead of flowers, I would prefer that my friends make memorial gifts

\_\_\_\_\_ Name Address  
\_\_\_\_\_ Name Address  
Final Disposition of My Body ☐ Burial - In-ground ☐ Above-ground ☐ Cremation ☐ Donation for Research  
at \_\_\_\_\_  
Cemetery Town

☐ I have ☐ I have not consulted with the above named cemetery regarding:  
☐ a cemetery plot ☐ a vault ☐ crypt ☐ niche for created remains ☐ memorial marker ☐ services  
Location of Ownership Certificate (Deed for cemetery property, Certificate of Interment)

The location or number of my burial plot (cemetery, mausoleum, columbarium niche) or other instructions

Open Casket: ☐ Yes ☐ No Type of Casket \_\_\_\_\_ Color \_\_\_\_\_ Interior \_\_\_\_\_  
Metal, Wood, Fiberglass exterior

Clothing: ☐ Current Wardrobe ☐ New ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_  
Jewelry: \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Stays on ☐ Return to: \_\_\_\_\_



# *Funeral Services*

*(For the Funeral Home and the Parish Church)*

## **Type of Service**

- 1) ☐ Wake Service, Funeral Mass and Burial                      3) ☐ Funeral Mass and Burial
- 2) ☐ Wake Service, Funeral Mass, Cremation and Burial of Ashes    4) ☐ Cremation, Memorial Mass and Burial

A **Church Service** will be provided on days when a funeral mass is not permitted. (*See page 46*)

I want to have these services conducted at \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_  
Parish Town

I realize that the funeral home and parish will fulfill my selections when possible to the best of their abilities.

Funeral Home \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Clergy \_\_\_\_\_

Pallbearers

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## **Wake Service (*See page 46*)**

Scripture Readings    Reading \_\_\_\_\_

Reading \_\_\_\_\_

Reading \_\_\_\_\_

## **Funeral Mass/Church Service (*See page 46*)**

Scripture Readings    1st Reading \_\_\_\_\_ Reader \_\_\_\_\_

(*See pages 53-56*)

2nd Reading \_\_\_\_\_ Reader \_\_\_\_\_

(*See pages 56-60*)

Gospel \_\_\_\_\_ Read by a deacon or a priest

(*See pages 60-68*)

## **Music (*See page 68*)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

Signature

Date