

Order of Christian Funerals: Planning and Preparation Guide

PLANNING A FUNERAL AT SAINT JAMES THE APOSTLE PARISH

Order of Christian Funerals

All items in bold can be selected by the family of the deceased. All other items are predetermined by the rubrics of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and/or the Order of Christian Funerals.

Sprinkling with Holy Water

Placing of the Pall

Procession

Collect

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel Reading

General Intercessions

Presentation of the Gifts

Prayer over the Offerings

Preface

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

Sign of Peace

Communion Procession

Final Commendation

Recession

Scheduling

The family themselves or funeral home, coordinating with the Parish Secretary, will work with the preexisting liturgical calendar on scheduling the exact date and time. Our parish office is open Monday-Wednesday 8:30am-4pm, Thursday 8:30am-5pm, and Friday 8:30am-2pm.

Ordinarily, funerals are scheduled for 10am. In the rare case of two funerals scheduled on the same day, the services may be scheduled at 10am and Noon. Most cemeteries do not offer burial services after 2pm. Funerals are not scheduled on Sundays or during the Sacred Triduum.

Once again, Funeral Masses begin promptly at 10am due to the Parochial School schedule. Mourners are encouraged to arrive at the Church in a quiet and reverent manner before the beginning of Mass.

Liturgy Planning

The Director of Sacred Liturgy is available to assist you with planning the funeral, selecting appropriate readings, and choosing sacred music. Please contact Dr. Marc Brunelle for assistance at mbrunelle@stjamesge.org or 630-469-7540 x 207. Any exceptions to these guidelines, if possible, should be shared with the Director of Sacred Liturgy.

Homily Notes

Please provide an obituary to the pastor via the Director of Sacred Liturgy no later than twenty-four hours before the funeral to personalize the sermon. Normatively, the homily explains the spiritual significance of the Resurrection in the context of human life and death.

Eulogy

The *Order of Christian Funerals* (\$170) provides, “a member or friend of the family may speak of the deceased before the final commendation begins,” however, the most recent edition of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* states, “At Funeral Masses there should usually be a short Homily, but to the exclusion of a funeral eulogy of any kind” (§382). Ordinarily, Saint James the Apostle Parish does not permit eulogies at Mass. Families are encouraged to offer remarks at the Visitation (wake), after the burial, or at the luncheon.

In the rare instance an exception is made to the *General Instruction*, then any eulogy offered must be appropriate, focused on the spiritual life of the decedent, and less than five minutes in length. Please email Fr. Keith directly at kwolfe@stjamesge.org to request an exception. You must include a copy of the eulogy with the request.

Offerings

In order to provide a sacred and reverent Funeral Mass, the offering donations are as follows:

1. Director of Sacred Liturgy: \$200 (planning and accompanist)
2. Cantor: \$150 (vocalist)
3. Church: \$200 (facility usage set by the Diocese)
4. Presider: \$150 (suggested by the Diocese)
5. IF utilizing the Narthex for a Visitation: \$100

Either the Funeral Home or the family themselves can give the offerings to the Funeral Sacristan upon arriving at the Church.

Sacred Music

The list of sacred music we offer for the Mass of Christian Burial is found in this [booklet](#). Care has been taken in the choosing of this music, which adheres to the norms set forth by the Catholic Church for its appropriateness of text and quality of composition. Any music that deviates from this list must be approved by the Director of Sacred Liturgy. Secular music (sports anthems or popular music) of any kind is not permitted.

Please select the following:

1. Processional Hymn
2. Psalm Response (This will be sung by the cantor)
3. Presentation Hymn
4. Communion Hymn
5. Recessional Hymn

Ideally, these selections will be decided before the meeting with the Director of Sacred Liturgy.

Guest Musicians

Any guest organists or cantors must be approved by the Director of Sacred Liturgy. Before approval, they must demonstrate their knowledge of the Catholic funeral rite, and have sufficient performing experience.

Readers

Please select up to three (3) readers from among your family and friends. Readers at Mass must be practicing Catholics in good standing, according to the *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (§133). Ordinarily, one reader will proclaim the First Reading from the Old Testament and either the same reader or another reader will proclaim the Second Reading from the New Testament.

These readers will be invited forward by the priest at the appropriate time. All reading selections will be placed on the ambo (pulpit) before Mass. The readers do not need to bring copies of the readings with them to Mass.

Ordinarily, the priest reads the Prayer of the Faithful (petitions/intentions) just as he always proclaims the Gospel. However, you may select an additional reader for the intentions. This reader may be a non-Catholic.

If you prefer, the parish can supply readers.

First Reading

Please select [one \(1\) reading](#) from the Old Testament. However, during the Season of Easter, the First Reading is always from the [New Testament](#). Remember, this reader will be invited forward by the priest at the appropriate time. All reading selections will be placed on the ambo (pulpit) before Mass. The readers do not need to bring copies of the readings with them to Mass.

Responsorial Psalm

Please select [one \(1\) psalm](#). Do not choose a reader for the psalm. This will be sung by the vocalist with accompaniment by the organist.

Second Reading

Please select [one \(1\) reading](#) from the New Testament. Remember, this reader will be invited forward by the priest at the appropriate time. All reading selections will be placed on the ambo (pulpit) before Mass. The readers do not need to bring copies of the readings with them to Mass.

Gospel

Please select [one \(1\) Gospel](#) reading. Remember, this is always proclaimed by the priest or deacon.

General Intercessions

Please select one (1) version of the Intercessions, otherwise known as the Prayer of the Faithful or Petitions, available as an [appendix](#) to this guide. Remember, this reader may be a non-Catholic, if desired.

Pallbearers

Family members may select pallbearers to escort the coffin during the Processional and Recessional. Pallbearers are omitted in the presence of cremains. Traditionally, male family members serve as pallbearers. These selections should be made by the family of the deceased at the Funeral Home.

Presentation of the Gifts

After the Intercessions and before the Offertory, the family may select up to three (3) gift bearers to process with the water and wine cruets and ciborium with unconsecrated hosts. The Presider will verbally instruct the gift bearers at the appropriate time.

Flowers

The family may choose to provide flowers for the sanctuary at their own cost. The ordinary placement for arrangements is in front of the ambo (pulpit) and altar. Flowers should not block the main aisle, any emergency exits, or the altar itself. Families may donate the arrangements to the Church. If not, they must be removed before the procession to the cemetery.

Decorations

There are no photos or collage boards in the sanctuary. Families may bring some for display in the narthex (lobby). If so, they must be removed before the procession to the cemetery. A small portrait may be placed next to the urn if there are cremains instead of a casket.

Visitation and Burial

St. James offers the opportunity to hold a Visitation in our Narthex no more than one hour before the Mass of Christian Burial. This is subject to availability and is not guaranteed. The Visitation can be arranged with Dr. Marc Brunelle, our Director of Sacred Liturgy, during your liturgy planning meeting. There is an additional fee for the use of the Narthex, which can be found under OFFERINGS on page 2 of this document. Normally, as scheduling and availability permits, a priest or deacon will offer prayers at both the very beginning of the wake and burial.

Norms for the Reception of Holy Communion

Holy Communion, the Most Holy Body and Precious Blood of Our Lord, is the source and summit of the Catholic Faith. For all those who are not Catholic, or do not regularly practice the Catholic Faith, please remain seated or come forward with your arms across your chest to indicate for a liturgical greeting.

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