

When is the rosary prayed for the deceased?

The rosary is a prayer which offers consolation to the family of the deceased. This prayer may be prayed at any time during the visitation at the funeral home or at the church. The rosary should not take the place of the vigil. However, it may be prayed as part of the vigil or after the vigil.

Who will lead the music for the funeral liturgy?

A parish cantor and parish instrumentalist(s) support the singing of the congregation. Guest musicians may be welcome to take part, but this must be verified with the parish musicians. When guest musicians participate, they do not take the place of parish musicians, but join them in the musical ministry. Many parishes have funeral choirs that support the singing of the congregation.

When may favorite songs be sung?

Hymns and liturgical songs consonant with the guidelines in the GENERAL PRINCIPLES section may be used during the funeral liturgy. Sacred songs that are not connected with the liturgy, e.g. "Ave Maria," "Panis Angelicus." and favorite songs of Mary or the saints, may be sung or played as part of the prelude before the funeral Mass or after the vigil at the funeral home. Secular songs may not be performed in the church, but may be performed at the funeral home after the vigil, or at another time, or at the funeral dinner.

Where can I find resources for celebrating Christian funerals?

The most important resource is the ritual book, Order of Christian Funerals, prepared by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy and approved by the USCCB in 1989. The Order of Christian Funerals is also available in a study edition. Both can be purchased through the Cathedral Bookstore (260-399-1443). The Cathedral Bookstore will also be able to assist in locating other funeral resources.



**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT
CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN FUNERALS IN
THE DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND**



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May Catholics be cremated?

Yes, as long as our Catholic belief in the resurrection of the body is respected. Cremation should take place after the funeral liturgy.

May we celebrate a funeral Mass in the presence of cremated remains?

The Church prefers that the funeral liturgy be celebrated in the presence of the body, which we reverence as God's good creation. However, for a serious reason, it is possible to celebrate the funeral liturgy in the presence of cremated remains. In this case, the urn containing the cremated remains may be placed on a table or stand where the body would normally be during the liturgy, but the urn is not incensed. This is only done to reverence the body, which is not present. The cremated remains must be buried or entombed.

May we celebrate a Christian funeral for an unbaptized infant?

Yes, if the parents intended to baptize the child. The appropriate rites and texts are used from the Order of Christian Funerals.

May we celebrate a Christian funeral for a stillborn infant?

Yes, the consolation of the funeral rites is offered for the parents of stillborn or miscarried infants. The appropriate rites and texts are used from the Order of Christian Funerals.

May we celebrate a Christian funeral for a non-practicing or lapsed Catholic?

Yes, if it can be determined that this would not be contrary to the wishes of the deceased.

May we celebrate a Christian funeral for a baptized person who is not a Roman Catholic?

Yes, if the minister of the deceased is not available, a spouse or family member has requested the funeral, and it would not have been contrary to the will of the deceased. If a funeral Mass is celebrated, the name of the deceased is not mentioned in the Eucharistic Prayer, when we mention only those in full communion with the Catholic Church. In case of doubt, contact the Chancellor of the diocese.

May we celebrate a Christian funeral for a catechumen?

Yes, catechumens are entitled to the rites of Christian burial since they are members of the household of the Church.

May we celebrate a Christian funeral for an unbaptized person who is not a catechumen?

No. The Christian burial rites are for the baptized, catechumens, and unbaptized infants only. It may be pastorally sound to participate in a funeral service of the Word and prayer for an unbaptized person, but the Christian rites may not be celebrated.

May we celebrate a Christian funeral for a person who has committed suicide?

Yes. We may not judge the state of mind or the condition of the soul of the deceased, whom we commend to God's mercy.

Where may a Christian funeral be celebrated?

The vigil is normally celebrated in a funeral home, though under special circumstances it may be celebrated in the home of the deceased or in the parish church.

The funeral liturgy is celebrated in the parish church of the deceased. When this is not possible, another church or chapel may be used if approved by the pastors involved and the diocese. In case of doubt, check with the Chancellor's office. The funeral liturgy is not to take place in the home of the deceased, in a funeral home, or a cemetery chapel.

Though many people are lax about registering in a parish and participating in parish life, the parish is the basic unit of faith life. The parish church is the public place in which the Catholic community - the Body of Christ - professes its corporate faith. Grief is difficult, and some may prefer to grieve in private, but funeral liturgies are public, celebrated in the midst of a community gathered to bolster the faith and hope of the mourners.

The Committal normally takes place at the grave site.

May the coffin be draped with the American flag?

If a national flag or other flag is on the coffin, it should be removed before entry into the church. As a community of faith, what we celebrate is beyond any national or organizational boundaries. Only the pall, a sign that the baptized person has put on Christ may be used in the church.

When will the eulogy be given?

A eulogy is a text praising the deceased. There is no eulogy during the Catholic funeral rites. During the vigil and the funeral liturgy, a homily based on the scriptures is preached and words of comfort are shared. Brief words of remembrance may be shared by family members or friends of the deceased, according to the diocesan guidelines given in the GENERAL PRINCIPLES and the SPEAKING IN REMEMBRANCE sections of this booklet. The most appropriate time for such words is after the celebration of the vigil or at the funeral dinner.