



DIocese OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

Guidance for Those Preparing "Words of Remembrance" to be spoken at a Catholic Funeral Liturgy

To the Family Member or Friend who will be offering words on the life of the deceased:

Please accept the condolences of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend as you mourn the passing of your loved one from this world. The family has entrusted you with a sacred task in asking you to "speak in remembrance" of the departed on their behalf.

The following guidelines are provided to help you prepare and deliver your remarks:

- To "speak in remembrance" means to give a brief reflection on the life of the deceased in the context of his or her life of faith. Such a reflection should revolve around God's action in the life of the deceased, and how His blessings have enriched the world through that life. It also serves an evangelizing purpose, by drawing attention to the deceased in accordance with how his or her life bore witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- These liturgical words of remembrance are therefore not the same as the secular understanding of a "eulogy," which is a reminiscing and toasting of the life of the departed outside the context of faith.
- In preparing words of remembrance, it might be helpful to consider how the deceased most resembled Christ:
 1. in his or her relationship with others
 2. in his or her living of Christian virtue, and perspective on right and wrong
 3. in his or her suffering
 4. in his or her faith in our Heavenly Father's concern for all people
- A brief story or example might be a helpful means to illustrate a particular point.
- Christians believe that in death, life is changed, not ended. Consider not only the person's past life, but also the hope we have of being united again in God's Presence.

Additional Guidelines:

- Only one person may deliver the words of remembrance at the funeral Mass.
- At no time is it acceptable to use crude or profane language, or to engage in actions that would not ordinarily take place during the sacred liturgy.
- The spoken words of remembrance cannot exceed two or three minutes in length – the basic equivalent of a single typed page of double-spaced text in regular 12-point font
- The remarks should be put on paper beforehand and read, but rehearsing your remarks aloud will help you to prepare and deliver the reflection more confidently
- You may wish to review what you plan to say with the priest or pastoral minister who is assisting in the funeral preparation.
- Please refer as well to the full diocesan Policy for Speaking in Remembrance, which offers additional context. The diocesan Office of Worship is also available to answer further questions (260-422-4611).