

St. John Fisher Church Funeral Guidelines



We are sorry for your loss. In the midst of your grief, please allow us to minister to you, your family, your friends, and your colleagues. We understand that people in grief often want to do one last act for their loved one; the most you can do to honor your loved one is to pray for them as we celebrate the Church's liturgy together.

Though we certainly remember your loved one at Mass, it is Christ whom we worship each time we come to church to pray and worship. Our worship of Christ is central in the three times we gather, as outlined in the *Order of Christian Funerals*.

Families meet with the Bereavement Committee to prepare for the rites. Please contact the parish office at 513-561-9431 x116 to schedule a time.

Vigil for the Deceased

- These prayers normally take place at the funeral home, usually the night before the Funeral Mass. A member of our Bereavement Committee, a priest, or deacon leads these brief prayers.
- The Vigil is the ordinary place where eulogies, and mourners speaking about the life of the loved one who has died, are given.
- Specific prayers may also take place at St. John Fisher, before the funeral Mass begins, if the visitation takes place at church.
- Praying the rosary and other private devotions may be appropriate at the funeral home, or in St. John Fisher gathering area, but does not replace the Vigil prayers from the *Order of Christian Funerals*.

Mass of Christian Burial/Christian Burial Outside of Mass

- Because we want to minister to you in your grief, St. John Fisher will ordinarily provide lectors who will read the Scripture readings and Universal Prayer, as well as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. If other lectors are utilized, they must be lectors in the parish where they attend Mass. If Extraordinary Ministers who are not members of St. John Fisher are utilized, they must be Commissioned Ministers in the parish where they attend Mass.

- Some of the music is predetermined by the Music Minister, the liturgical season and the appropriateness of the music for the Rite. Only liturgical music may be used for the funeral Mass & prelude music. Final approval of musical selections are made by the Pastor or Parochial Vicar. St. John Fisher is responsible for arranging the presence of liturgical musicians. If the family chooses other musicians/cantors, the family is responsible for financially compensating them.
- If a priest other than the pastor or parochial vicar is the presider at the funeral, please have him contact the pastor of St. John Fisher at 513-561-9431 x111 to discuss the guidelines. In these situations it is the family's responsibility to compensate the presider, as agreed upon with the family and the presider.
- In extenuating circumstances (i.e., no visitation or Vigil was held) the Words of Remembrance (Eulogy) might precede the Mass in church, but the usual place is at the Vigil. If a reception is held following burial, this is another opportunity to remember your loved one. In the event that a Eulogy is delivered before Mass, it must take place 15 minutes before the scheduled time of Mass. If the family desires that people be present, they must publish the time in the obituary. Out of respect for the liturgical ministers, presider, funeral directors and cemetery, Mass will begin promptly at the designated time.
- A member(s) of the Bereavement Committee will meet with family members of the deceased prior to the funeral to discuss reading selections from the Scriptures. These readings are ordinarily taken from the *Order of Christian Funerals*, and may focus on the life of the deceased, in light of the life, death and resurrection of Christ. The liturgical season of the church may give direction to the readings. Musical suggestions may also be made during the preparation meeting with the Bereavement Committee member and the family.
- So that the homily may be appropriate for the life of the person, family members are asked to answer the questions on the attached sheet and email them to the bereavement team contact. You may also drop them off at the parish office prior to the funeral.

Rite of Committal (Burial or Inurnment at a cemetery)

- Committal of the Body or Cremated Remains usually takes place immediately following the Funeral Mass.
- This service may be led by a priest, deacon or lay person.
- There may be Words of Remembrance given at this time.
- Military acknowledgments are made at this time.
- It is important to remember that the Procession to the cemetery is part of the liturgy, symbolic of our journey to the New and Eternal Jerusalem.

A Word about Cremation

Cremation is an option that is permitted in the Church today. Ideally, the body is present for the Mass of Christian Burial, with cremation following the Mass. The cremated remains may also be present for the Mass of Christian Burial, with burial or inurnment taking place following the Mass. In either event, the cremated remains must be reverently buried or place in a niche, accompanied by usual prayers of the Rite of Committal.

A Note About Fees

The funeral director will inform the family of fees at the time of planning, which are added to the cost of the funeral.

Father of Mercies and God of all consolation, You pursue us with untiring love and dispel the shadow of death with the bright dawn of life.

Comfort your family in their loss and sorrow. Be our refuge and our strength, O Lord, and lift us from the depths of grief into the peace and light of your presence.

Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, by dying has destroyed our death, and by rising, restored our life. Enable us therefore to press on toward him, so that, after our earthly course is run, he may reunite us with those we love, when every tear will be wiped away.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

