

PREPARING FOR THE FUNERAL

If you've not already discussed date/time of the funeral, the funeral home will contact the parish to check on the availability of the church and pastor.

The pastor will set up a time to meet with your family to guide you through the Funeral Rites. He will give you the opportunity to choose appropriate scripture readings and discuss any other funeral needs.

Catholic family and friends may serve as lectors, Eucharistic Ministers or altar servers. If the family doesn't have anyone to designate for those roles, the parish will assist in filling them.

The Director of Music will also be in touch with you regarding appropriate liturgical music and choosing a cantor.

The parish Administrative Assistant will prepare the funeral worship aid.

If the family desires to host a funeral luncheon, the parish office will check on the availability of the hall and contact the luncheon leader.

Honorariums for the services of the priest, musicians and altar servers are paid through the funeral home. A small fee is also paid through the funeral home for the purchase of certain items for the luncheon. The rest of the meal is provided by the generosity of families and friends of the deceased's family and fellow parishioners.



For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. John 6:40

SYMBOLS USED DURING FUNERAL

LITURGIES

Pall is a large white cloth placed over the casket by family members at the entrance of the church. It is a reminder of the white garment that is put on the newly baptized to symbolize his or her new life in Christ.

Crucifix A crucifix is also placed on the pall to remind us that we are marked by the sign of the cross in baptism and that it was through His suffering on the cross that Jesus won for us the promise of the resurrection.

Holy Water is sprinkled on the casket by the family when it is received at the church and during the final commendation at the end of the funeral Mass by the priest. The Holy Water reminds us of our baptism and the baptism of our deceased loved one.

Incense is used to honor the body of the deceased, who through baptism, became a living temple of God's present. It is also a sign of the community's prayers rising up to heaven and a sign of farewell.

The Paschal Candle is placed in the sanctuary close to where the casket will be placed. It reminds us of Christ's presence among us and of His victory over death, a victory in which we share through our baptism.

WHEN A LOVED ONE DIES..... GUIDELINES FOR CATHOLIC FUNERALS AT OUR LADY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT CATHOLIC CHURCH

"The bodies of the dead must be treated with respect and charity, in faith and hope of the Resurrection....it honors the children of God who are temples of the Holy Spirit." (CCC2300)

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

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This brochure was developed by the staff of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church to give you an overview of preparing for Catholic funerals should the need arise. Be assured that in your time of mourning, the parish is here to assist you in any way that we can.

When you experience the death of a loved one or friend, call the Church Office at 804-843-3125. If no one is available to take your call, please call the pastor at 757-778-5118 to inform the parish of your loss and to ask for prayers and guidance.

OLBS CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

Catholics are unique and call for certain practices in the handling and care of the remains of the deceased. Therefore, in the blessed grounds of a Catholic cemetery there are safeguards, - mandated by the Church's Canon Law - which guarantee permanence, reverence and respect for the remains of the deceased.

Our parish owns and maintains two Catholic cemeteries: Saint Therese Cemetery on King William Avenue and Saint John Kanti on Polish Town Road in New Kent County.

Catholic cemeteries have a long tradition of dedicated service to the Catholic community including non-Catholics spouses, children, parents and other relatives. Christians with a connection to the Catholic Community may also be buried in the Catholic Cemeteries.

If your family is in need of a burial plot, please call the Chairman of the Cemetery Committee at 804-843-3215 or by email at cemetery-chair@OLBS-catholic.org. He will assist you in choosing a plot and discuss payment options with you.



CATHOLIC FUNERAL RITES

1. **VIGIL (WAKE) SERVICE** The vigil service is usually conducted at the funeral home the evening before the funeral is to take place. It is a time for family and friends to gather to remember the deceased person's life, to pray to God for the repose of the departed soul and for Christ's love and strength for the family members. The vigil is a Service of Scripture and Prayer. The rosary, or part of the rosary, may be prayed as well. This service is often the first gathering of the faithful and friends with the family.
2. **FUNERAL MASS** The tradition of the Church has always been the celebration of the Mass with the body present. As Catholic Christians, we respect and honor the body of the deceased which in Baptism becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit.
3. **RITE OF COMMITTAL** The Rite of Committal is the conclusion of the funeral rites and may be celebrated beside the open grave or place of internment. Here the faithful express their hope that, with those who have gone before marked with the sign of faith, the deceased awaits the glory of the resurrection and passes into the welcoming company of those who see God face to face.



SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. **CREMATION** The Church strongly prefers the body of the deceased to be present for the funeral rites since the presence of the body clearly recalls the life and death of the person. It is the Church's recommendation that if cremation of the body is to take place, it occurs following the Funeral Mass. However, if cremation takes place immediately after death, the Church now permits the cremated remains to be brought into the church for the celebration of the funeral liturgy, including the Eucharist.
2. **FINAL DISPOSITION OF THE CREMATED REMAINS** Following the celebration of the Funeral Mass, the earthly remains of the deceased are to be reverently buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium. The Church stresses that cremated remains of the deceased are to be treated with the same respect given to the body namely they, too, should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium. The practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air, on the ground or of keeping them in the home of a relative or friend is not considered reverent.
3. **GRAVESIDE SERVICE** If the family does not choose to have a funeral Mass, they have the option of a graveside service. The Body or ashes is taken to the final resting place with a simple Rite of Prayer and Scripture followed by the prayer of committal. It is preferred that this service be lead by a priest or deacon.

"May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs come to welcome you and take you to the holy city, the new and eternal Jerusalem"