

FUNERAL GUIDELINES

Parishes of St. Mary's
Edgeworthstown, Rathowen and Streete

Our parish community and the priests of the parish are fully aware of the sensitivity surrounding the death of your loved one.

Our intention is always to firstly express our deep sympathy with your family during your time of loss. In the funeral arrangements we shall do all we can at this painful time to be a comfort and support to the family.

Reception of your deceased loved one at the Church

The parish community seeks to comfort and support you and your family through this very sad time, as you move from the privacy of your grief to the public celebration of your loved one's funeral.

The reception of the body at the church is the first stage of the public rite of the Christian community. It is general practice that this takes place on the evening before the funeral Mass. This allows the parting from family and friends to take place in stages. Since the church is where the community of faith comes to worship, the Rite of Reception of the Body takes place at the church.

The entrance procession led by the priest, the coffin and the chief mourners may be accompanied by music or song, which helps to gather this community as one, in grief, and in your hope of resurrection.

In baptism, this person was presented to the community and welcomed at the door of the church. Now the family and all who accompany the body of the deceased person are greeted at the door of the church. The body of the deceased is sprinkled with holy water.

The Paschal Candle - the Easter candle - is lighting to remind us that we are in the presence of the Risen Christ. We will come into the fullness of eternal life with him.

The coffin is placed near the altar. This reflects the importance of the one who has died to the gathered Christian community. We have come to commend them, to entrust them to our God.

We place on the coffin, symbols of our hope:
A cross - reminder of Christ's victory over death.
A Book of the Gospels or a Bible - reminder of God's faithfulness to his people.

During this liturgy, we hear God's Word as an invitation to recall again our belief in Christ's victory over death, and in being gathered after death into the fullness of God's kingdom. Then, the homily and the prayer of intercession put into words our hopes for our loved one and the needs of the bereaved and the community. Traditionally, we conclude this liturgy with a decade of the rosary, usually the first Glorious Mystery - the Resurrection.

Participation at the Funeral Mass

The Funeral Mass is the central liturgical celebration for the deceased. The community gathers together to celebrate the life and death of one of its members. By coming together we proclaim their presence and by our actions, in word and in symbol, our central belief in the resurrection of the dead.

Family and friends are very welcome to participate at the Funeral Mass. It is usual to have a reading from the Old Testament, followed by a psalm. The second reading is from the New Testament. Final arrangements on these and other matters are usually confirmed the evening before the Funeral Mass with the Priest celebrant. A selection of suggested readings from the Old Testament and the New Testament and a selection of Prayers of the Faithful follow these notes. In the event of a visiting Priest celebrating the Mass, the Priests of the parish will do all they can to assist him.

It is usual that families wish to bring forward mementos of their loved ones. This is perfectly acceptable and takes place at the beginning of the Mass.

The community calls on God and commends the deceased person to God. At the end of the funeral liturgy, the family, friends and the Christian community journey with their loved one to the place of committal, the place of burial.

The Rite of Committal

This is the final farewell by the family and community of the deceased, whom we entrust to the tender and merciful embrace of God. The care taken to prepare the body of the deceased for burial reflects our Christian belief in the fullness of eternal life and the resurrection of the body. The prayers and gestures of the funeral rites also affirm the Church's reverence for the body. Normally celebrated at the grave, this is the conclusion of the funeral rites. The community acknowledges the reality of separation and commends the deceased to God.

While burial is more common in Ireland, the practice of cremation is accepted by the Catholic Church. If the body of the deceased person is to be cremated, readings will take place at the crematorium and the rite of committal will take place at the burial of ashes. We honour them as we honoured

the body. They are reverently buried or entombed in a place reserved for the burial of the dead, as soon after cremation as possible.

We hope that these guidelines will help families in their time of grief and that they will find the Priests of the parish supportive during their time of grief. We would like to extend our sympathy and prayerful support to all families who have lost loved ones.

May the Lord in his goodness continue to bless you with his peace and consolation.

FUNERAL MASS

First & Second Readings - see separate leaflet

Prayers of the Faithful/Offertory

These suggested Prayers of the Faithful may be adapted or added to as the family wishes:

1. We pray for N who has died.
May God now welcome him/her into his heavenly home of eternal happiness and peace.
Lord, hear us
2. We pray for the relatives and friends of N, especially his/her wife/husband N, his/her sons and daughters, his/her brothers and sisters, the members of his/her extended family, his/her neighbours and friends.
May God fill their hearts with his comfort and consolation.
Lord, hear us

3. We pray for all those whose lives are dedicated to caring for the sick and in particular we pray for the doctors, nurses, chaplain and staff of Hospital / Nursing Home who cared for N during his/her illness/old age.
May God reward their goodness and kindness.
Lord, hear us

4. We pray in thanksgiving for our neighbours and friends who have been so kind to us during this time of sadness.
May God reward their kindness and bless their homes with happiness and peace.
Lord, hear us

5. As we pray that N will find eternal peace, we pray that the peace that is in heaven will touch the troubled parts of our world, our country, our parish, our homes and our hearts.
Lord, hear us

6. We pray for all who have died, especially the relatives and friends of N who have gone before him/her:
May God unite them all in the happiness and peace of his heavenly home.
Lord, hear us

Members of the family are invited to bring up the gifts at the Offertory of the Mass.

Music for the Funeral Mass

Families may make their own arrangements in consultation with the Priest. The important point to remember, given the sacredness of the Funeral Liturgy, is that all music and songs within the Funeral Mass must be of a religious nature. A selection of suggested hymns follows. If a secular song is to be sung or played it happens at the conclusion of the prayers of commendation while the remains leave the church or during sympathizing.

Suggested Hymns for Mass of Christian Burial

Entrance:

Christ Be Beside Me.
Be Thou My Vision. Holy God. Seek Ye First.
Lord of All Hopefulness.
God of Mercy and Compassion.
A New Hymn of Praise.
Amazing Grace

Psalms:

The Lord's My Shepherd.
Song of a Young Prophet.
Here I am Lord.
I Will Never Forget You.
Like the Deer that yearns Out of the Depths.
Be Not Afraid All I Ask Of You
Sé an Tiarna M'Aoire
Yahweh I know you are near

Preparation of Gifts:

Ag Críost an Síol
I will be with you
See Us Lord

About Your Altar

Lord Accept The Gifts We Offer
My God Accept My Heart This Day
All That I Am
Come Back To Me
In Bread We Bring You Lord

Communion:

Céad Míle Fáilte Romhat
Be Still For the Presence Of The Lord.
Whatsoever You Do
Eat This Bread. Take and Eat
Wait For The Lord
How Great Thou Art
Let us break bread together

Recessional:

Abide with me
Jesus Remember Me
How Great Thou Art
There is a Place
On Eagle's Wing

Local Funeral Undertakers:

Gogan Funeral Directors

Main Street, Edgeworthstown

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