

St. Stephen Catholic Community

Order of Christian

Funerals [OCF]

"In the face of death, the Church confidently proclaims that God has CREATED EACH PERSON FOR ETERNAL LIFE and that Jesus, the Son of God, by his death and resurrection, has broken the chains of sin and death that bound humanity." [OCF, 1]



At the death of a loved one, many families find themselves unfamiliar with Catholic funeral rites and practices. Below are a series of topics on Catholic teachings regarding funerals that may help you to become acquainted with Church funeral rituals and practices. We hope that you will find this information helpful.

- ✚ What is the Order of Christian Funerals [OCF]
- ✚ What Should I Do First When A Loved One Dies?
- ✚ What Are The Catholic Funeral Rites?
 - Vigil For the Deceased
 - Funeral Mass & Outline of the Funeral Mass
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- ✚ Funeral Planning at the Parish with the Family
- ✚ Selecting Hymns for the Funeral Mass
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- ✚ Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass
- ✚ What Is a Memorial Mass?
- ✚ Funeral Rites for Children
- ✚ Cremation
- ✚ What To Do When Someone is Dying.
- ✚ Pre-Plan Your Funeral Liturgy
- ✚ Prayers At The Time of Death

Order of Christian Funerals

What do Catholics believe about death?

The central teaching of our catholic faith about death centers on the PASCHAL MYSTERY. Belief in the Paschal Mystery is at the core of our Catholic teaching. Thus when one of our members dies, the actions of a Catholic community must clearly proclaim this central mystery throughout all the prayers and ritual actions that accompany the death of a loved one. Thus the funeral rites are not so much a “celebration of life” of the deceased as they are a privileged opportunity to return the gift of the deceased to God because of our belief in eternal life.

What we believe about death and how we pray at the time of death is set forth in the ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS [OCF]. This ritual book contains the prayers and ritual celebrations that enable the Christian community to mourn, as well as to hope, by focusing on the mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ [Paschal Mystery].

The Order of Christian Funerals [1989 edition] is the only canonically approved edition in the United States in English. The OCF explains our Catholic beliefs surrounding death and eternal life. It also provides the prayers and primary rituals that accompany death in the Catholic Church.

During the Second Vatican Council the bishops of the world called for a reform of the rite of funerals so that “the Rite of Funerals should express more clearly the **PASCHAL CHARACTER** of Christian death and should correspond more closely to the circumstances and traditions of various regions.”

The OCF approved by Rome highlights the following:

-  OUR BELIEF IN LIFE AFTER DEATH.
-  COMMUNAL NATURE OF ALL FUNERALS HIGHLIGHTING THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY.
-  IMPORTANCE OF RITUAL CELEBRATIONS WHERE THE SIGNS AND SYMBOLS AFFIRM OUR BELIEF IN AND HOPE IN THE PASCHAL MYSTERY.

WEBINAR – Order of Christian Funerals

If you are interested in learning more about the Order of Christian Funerals you may watch this free webinar.

<https://fdlc.org/2021/02/webinar-the-order-of-christian-funerals/>

“At the death of a Christian, whose life of faith was begun in the water of baptism and strengthened at the Eucharistic table, the Church intercedes on behalf of the deceased because of its confident belief that death is not the end nor does it break the bonds forged in life. The Church also ministers to the sorrowing and consoles them in the funeral rites with the comforting word of God and the sacrament of the eucharist.” [OCF, 4]

CONTENTS OF THE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

The Order of Christian Funeral [OCF] sets forth the rituals, prayers and instructions from the time of death to the burial for the Catholic faithful. Below is an outline of what is contained in the OCF.

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WHAT SHOULD I DO FIRST WHEN A LOVED ONE DIES?

Please reach out to the parish office to contact Sr. Linda Gaupin CDP. This should be the first call that you make. [Phone: 407-699-5683, ex. 251]. All preparations for the funeral rites in the church and the schedule for a funeral are made through St. Stephen Catholic Community.

No matter what the situation is, even if you or your loved one have been away from the Church, even if the death is a suicide, even if you are Catholic and the family member who is dying or has died is not, St. Stephen Catholic Community is here to see you through this tough time.

Sr. Linda will walk with you to prepare the various funeral rites that mark the journey of death.

What are the Catholic Funeral Rites?

There are THREE MAIN LITURGICAL RITES that are celebrated at the time of death. All three are very important and normally are not omitted. The three liturgical rites are: The Vigil for the Deceased, the Funeral Mass, and the Rite of Committal. Click or paste here for a brief overview of the three rites: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0ziJIOQR9I>

Vigil for the Deceased

“The vigil for the deceased is the principal rite celebrated by the Christian Community in the time following death and before the funeral liturgy.” [OCF, 54]. The Vigil Service for the deceased normally occurs the day before the Funeral Mass at the Funeral home when family and friends gather in the presence of the body. During this time the Christian community keeps watch with the family and through the Vigil prayer all find strength in Christ’s presence. This period of time is often referred to as a wake or viewing.

The wake or viewing, which includes the Vigil Service, is important because it allows the family and friends of the deceased a designated period of time to come to grips with the reality of death and the loss of a loved one. During this time Church encourages eulogies to take place. Telling stories about the deceased, giving testimony, and or reminiscing enable mourners to gradually embrace the reality of the loss in their lives.

The Vigil takes the form of a liturgy of the word and consists of the introductory rites, the liturgy of the word, the prayer of intercession, and a concluding rite. THE VIGIL IS ALSO THE APPROPRIATE TIME FOR ANY EULOGIES TO TAKE PLACE RATHER THAN AT THE FUNERAL MASS.

Vigil for the Deceased

Structure of the Vigil:

- Greeting
- Opening Prayer
- Liturgy of the Word
- Gospel
- Homily – Reflections – **eulogies**
- Prayer of Intercession
- Lord’s Prayer
- Concluding Prayer
- Blessing



Funeral Mass

“The funeral liturgy is the central liturgical celebration of the Christian community for the deceased.” [OCF, 128]. The purpose of the Funeral Mass is to “give praise and thanks to God for Christ’s victory over sin and death, to commend the deceased to God’s tender mercy and compassion, and to seek strength in the proclamation of the paschal mystery.” [OCF, 128]

Thus the Funeral Liturgy of the Catholic Church is NOT the personal prayer of the family of the deceased. The Funeral Liturgy is an official, public prayer of the Church for the deceased and for the consolation of those loved one left behind.

Catholic funerals express and make present our belief in ETERNAL LIFE and the RESURRECTION OF THE BODY on the last day. The Funeral Mass is not a “celebration of the life of the person.” The prayers, scripture readings, symbols and gestures in the funeral rites all manifest our profound belief in life after death so that we can “look to the day when all the elect will be raised up and united in the kingdom of light and peace.” [OCF 129] The primary symbols at a Funeral Mass consist of holy water, light, the cross, incense, scripture, bread and wine, white garment [pall] etc.

A Funeral Mass may not take place in a funeral home.

Outline of the Funeral Mass

INTRODUCTORY RITES

The Mass begins with the reception of the body at the doors of the church.

Greeting
Sprinkling with Holy Water
Placing of the Pall
Entrance Procession
Opening Prayer

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Scripture Readings
Homily
Universal Prayer

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

FINAL COMMENDATION

Invitation to Prayer
Song of Farewell
Prayer of Commendation

Rite of Committal

The Rite of Committal “is the final act of the community of faith in caring for the body of its deceased member.” [OCF, 204] The Rite of Committal can be celebrated at a grave, tomb, or crematorium. It is preferred that it is celebrated at the grave site instead of a cemetery chapel.

The Rite of Committal may be celebrated by a friend or member of the family if a parish minister is unable to be present.

The ritual highlights the importance of the burial or entombment of the body soon after death. “The act of committal is a stark and powerful expression” of the separation in this life of the mourners from the deceased, and can help the mourners to face “the end of one relationship with the deceased and to begin a new one based on prayerful remembrance, gratitude, and the hope of resurrection and reunion.” [OCF, 213].



The family of the deceased is involved in the planning of the funeral Rites. When you meet with Sr. Linda at the church she will assist you with choosing the scripture readings and liturgical music for the Funeral Mass etc.

Only readings from scripture may be proclaimed at the Funeral Mass. The OCF provides a choice of scriptural readings that the family may choose either from the Old Testament or the New Testament. The scriptural selections proclaim the “paschal mystery, teach

remembrance of the dead, convey the hope of being gathered together again in God’s kingdom, and encourage the witness of Christian life.” [OCF 137]. The selection of scriptural readings may be found here: <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/bereavement-and-funerals>



Music for funerals should be chosen with great care. “The text of the songs chosen for a particular celebration should express the paschal mystery of the Lord’s suffering, death, and triumph over death and should be related to the readings from scripture.” [OCF, 30]

Music within the Funeral Mass does not memorialize the deceased, but rather gives praise to God who freed us from the bonds of death. Popular or secular music is not appropriate for the Funeral Mass.

Families are assisted in choosing music for the Funeral Mass in the following areas when they meet in the parish office: Entrance Chant, Responsorial Psalm, Offertory Chant, and Communion Chant. Recommended music for the Funeral Mass includes:

Entrance Chant

Jesus Christ is Risen Today* (*Easter Hymn*)
For all the Saints* (*Sine Nomine*)
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say (*Kingsfold*)
Be Not Afraid (Dufford)
Here I Am, Lord (Schutte)
There’s A Wideness in God’s Mercy (*In Babilone*)
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus* (*Hyfrydol*)
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (*Hyfrydol*)
Shall We Gather at the River (*Hanson Place*)
I Know that My Redeemer Lives (*Duke Street*)

Offertory Chant

Beyond the Moon and Stars (Schutte)
I Have Loved You (Joncas)
The King of Love My Shepherd Is (*St. Columba*)
Lord, You Have Come to the Seashore (*Pescador de*

Hombres)

O Breathe on Me, O Breath of God (*St. Columba*)
Prayer of St. Francis (Temple)
Hosea (Weston Priory)
I Know that My Redeemer Lives (Soper)
O God, You Search Me (Farrell)

Communion Chant

Bread for the World (Farrell)
Gift of Finest Wheat (*Bicentennial*)
I Am the Bread of Life (Toolan)
Love One Another (Dufford)
Taste and See (Moore)
On Eagle’s Wings (Joncas)
Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling (*Thompson*)
You Are Near (Schutte)
Draw Near (Janco)

Symbols for the Funeral Rites

Below are the primary symbols for the Funeral Rites. These are given a place of prominence and should not be overshadowed by other ordinary or secular symbols.



Easter Candle [Paschal Candle]

“The Easter candle reminds the faithful of Christ's undying presence among them, of his victory over sin and death, and of their share in that victory by virtue of their initiation. The Easter candle may be carried before the body in procession and/or be placed near the coffin during the funeral Mass. (OCF, 35)” It remains lighted until the liturgy is finished and the body has been removed.

Holy Water

“Blessed or holy water reminds the assembly of the saving waters of baptism. In the rite of reception of the body at the church, its use calls to mind the deceased's baptism and initiation into the community of faith.” [OCF 36] If it is not used at the entrance, it may be used during the final commendation; it is not used in both.



INCENSE

“Incense is used during the funeral rites as a sign of honor to the body of the deceased, which through baptism became the temple of the Holy Spirit.” [OCF 37] It is also a sign of the community's prayers rising to the throne of God. The priest may incense the gifts and the altar, then the body of the deceased, and finally the congregation. If incense is not used during the preparation of the gifts, it may be used during the final commendation; it is not used at both times.

THE PALL

The pall is the white garment that is a reminder of the white garment worn at baptism when the deceased was “clothed with Christ.” The pall is placed on the coffin after the Sprinkling with Holy Water in the Introductory Rites. It may be placed on the coffin by family members, friends, or other during the rite of reception. “The pall is a sign of the Christian dignity of the person. The use of the pall also signifies that all are equal in the eyes of God.” [OCF 38].



OTHER SYMBOLS

The Church permits other Christian symbols to be used during the Funeral Mass. These symbols reflect the Christian life. They include the following:



The **BOOK OF THE GOSPELS** or a bible may be placed on the coffin “as a sign that Christians live by the word of God and that fidelity to that word leads to eternal life.” [OCF 38].

“A **CROSS** may be placed on the coffin as a reminder that the Christian is marked by the cross in baptism and through Jesus’ suffering on the cross is brought to the victory of his resurrection.” [OCF 38].



FLOWERS are permissible if used in moderation and can enhance the funeral symbols. [OCF 38]. The use of flowers is limited during the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent.

The Church is very clear, however, about the use and placement of **OTHER SYMBOLS**. “Only Christian symbols may rest on or be placed near the coffin during the funeral liturgy. Any other symbols, for example, national flags or flags or insignia of associations, have no place in the funeral liturgy” (OCF, 38, 132). For this reason pictures of the deceased and other personal items are displayed in the Narthex of the Church.

“Any national flags or flags or insignia of associations or other groups to which the deceased belong are removed at the entrance of the Church.” [OCF 132]. In this case the:

Flag is removed when the coffin enters the Church.

The pall is placed on the coffin during the Introductory Rites.

At the end of the Funeral Mass the coffin with the pall is processed into the Narthex.

The pall is then removed and the flag is replaced on the coffin.

The coffin is moved outside for any military honors or rituals.

A 21 gun salute is done at the cemetery.

Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass

A Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass is permitted on special occasions when a Funeral Mass is NOT permitted. Funeral Masses can be celebrated any day except on Holy Days of Obligation, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter and the Sundays of the Advent, Lent and Easter seasons. On these prohibited days, the funeral liturgy outside of Mass, without the distribution of communion, is permitted followed by the Rite of Committal. [OCF, 271].

At times there may be circumstances when a Funeral Mass is not possible. For example, a priest may not be available for a while to preside at the Funeral Mass.

A Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass may also take place when for pastoral reasons the pastor and the family judge that this is more suitable.

A Funeral Liturgy outside of Mass is usually celebrated in the parish church. At times it may be celebrated in the home of the deceased, cemetery chapel etc. This decision is made in conjunction with the pastor of the parish.

The Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass may be led by a priest or deacon. It may also be led by a layperson.

MEMORIAL MASS

A Memorial Mass is celebrated when the body or cremated remains are not present. This may occur for specific reasons such as a Funeral Mass celebrated elsewhere; the body has been donated to science; or when the remains of the body are unattainable. A Memorial Mass may also be celebrated AFTER a Funeral mass usually on an anniversary of a death.

FUNERAL RITES FOR CHILDREN

The Order of Christian Funerals contains an entire section devoted to the Funeral Rites for Children. The same three main liturgical rites provided for adults may also be celebrated with children who have died: the Vigil for a Deceased Child, the Funeral Mass [and the Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass], and the Rite of Committal.

The loss of a child prior to birth or shortly after birth is a very difficult time for parents. The Church provides funeral rites that are available for children who have been baptized as well as for infants or children who have not been baptized. This includes infants who were still born or in instances of miscarriage. Each prayer for a dead child also offers an alternative for a child who died before receiving baptism. Even if the child's body is not present, the use of readings and prayers from the OCF can be very comforting to the family of a deceased infant.

For example, the OCF states: "Funeral rites may be celebrated for children whose parents intended them to be baptized but who died before baptism. In these celebrations the Christian community entrusts the child to God's all-embracing love and finds strength in this love and in Jesus' affirmation that the kingdom of God belongs to little children." [OCF, 238].

Are all the funeral rites celebrated at the death of an infant or stillborn? No.

The OCF encourages the use of those rites that will best meet the needs of the family and the community. "The minister, in consultation with those concerned, chooses those rites that best correspond to the particular needs and customs of the mourners. In some instances, for example, the death of an infant, on the rite of committal and perhaps one of the forms of prayer with the family may be desirable." [OCF, 235]. Please contact Sr. Linda Gaupin, CDP at the parish in the case of the death of an infant, a stillborn infant, or a miscarriage. She can help guide you through the rituals that may best suit your family in this time of loss.



Please note that QUEEN OF ANGELS CEMETERY at the San Pedro Center in Winter Park has the **Kingdom of Heaven Ministry**. This ministry seeks to serve, at no cost, the families of deceased children from conception up to one year of age. For more information, call Queen of Angels Cemetery at 407-246-4919.



Baptism In Danger of Death

A living infant in danger of death should be baptized without delay. Anyone can baptize with the consent of the parents when a priest or deacon is not available. The baptism must take place with water and the sacramental formula "I baptized you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." In this case the baptism is recorded in the territorial parish of the institution.

What happens when a child is still born or dies shortly after birth?

Sacraments are for the living. Thus baptism is not done in this instance since the infant is not alive. Pastoral care of parents during this time is especially important. The Church has the "Order for Blessing of Parents After a Miscarriage" in the case of a stillborn or miscarried baby. Nevertheless, any one of the funeral rites may be celebrated in this instance.

Many parents ask "Is my unbaptized child with God? The prayers provided in the funeral rites for unbaptized children all reflect on our belief in the abundant mercy of God. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states:

"As regards children who have died without Baptism, the Church can only entrust them to the mercy of God, as she does in her funeral rites for them. Indeed the great mercy of God who desires that all men should be saved and Jesus' tenderness toward children which caused him to say: 'Let them come to me, do not hinder them' allow us to hope that there is a way of salvation for children who have died without baptism. (CCC #1261)

You may also want to read the Vatican Document entitled: The Hope of Salvation for Infants Who Die Without Being Baptized. Click or past in your browser:

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20070419_unbaptised-infants_en.html



Cremation

Brief History of the Teaching on Cremation

The Catholic Church has permitted cremation since 1963 although the cremated remains were not permitted in the church for the funeral mass until 1997. The Catholic Church did not permit cremation in the past because the practice of cremation was associated with the denial of Christian teachings and or hatred of the Catholic Church.

In 1997 the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments approved the English texts used in the celebration of the funeral rites in the presence of the cremated remains of the deceased. From this date onwards the cremated remains are permitted to be present at the Funeral Rites of the Catholic Church.

In 2016 the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith published the instruction “Ad resurgendum com Christo” [ARCC] which specifically addressed what should be done with cremated remains.

Current Church Policies Regarding Cremated Remains and Catholic Funerals

Although the Catholic Church permits cremation and the presence of cremated remains at a Catholic Funeral, it nevertheless has strict policies regarding the respect for the cremated remains. All Catholics should be aware of the following teachings of the Church. Considerable anguish has been caused to families when a loved one has requested that their cremains be handled in a manner contrary to Catholic teaching. In the same manner Catholic families need to be aware of the following policies of the Catholic Church regarding the handling of cremated remains.

- 1, Cremation is permitted by the Catholic Church. The church strongly prefers, however, that the body of the deceased be present for the funeral rites and that cremation takes place AFTER the Funeral Mass. Nevertheless, a Funeral Mass with the cremated remains is permitted.
2. Following the most ancient church teachings, **THE CREMATED REMAINS MUST BE BURIED OR ENTOMBED.** “By burying the bodies of the faithful, the Church confirms her faith in the resurrection of the body,^[8] and intends to show the great dignity of the human body as an integral part of the human person whose body forms part of their identity.^[9] She cannot, therefore, condone attitudes or permit rites that involve erroneous ideas about death, such as considering death as the definitive annihilation of the person, or the moment of fusion with Mother Nature or the universe, or as a stage in the cycle of regeneration, or as the definitive liberation from the “prison” of the body.

Furthermore, burial in a cemetery or another sacred place adequately corresponds to the piety and respect owed to the bodies of the faithful departed who through Baptism have become temples of the Holy Spirit and in which “as instruments and vessels the Spirit has carried out so many good works” [ARCC, 10].

3. **The PLACE OF BURIAL OR ENTOMBMENT MUST BE IN A SACRED PLACE** “that is, in a cemetery or, in certain cases, in a church or an area, which has been set aside for this purpose, and so dedicated by the competent ecclesial authority.” [ARCC, 5]

4. The cremated remains may **NOT BE SCATTERED, DIVIDED, PRESERVED IN MEMENTOS, PIECES OF JEWELRY OR OTHER OBJECTS.**
“It is not permitted to scatter the ashes of the faithful departed in the air, on land, at sea or in some other way, nor may they be preserved in mementos, pieces of jewelry or other objects. These courses of action cannot be legitimized by an appeal to the sanitary, social, or economic motives that may have occasioned the choice of cremation.” [ARCC, 7]
5. The cremated remains **MAY NOT KEPT AT HOME NOR DIVIDED** among various family members.
“The conservation of the ashes of the departed in a domestic residence is not permitted. . . . the ashes may not be divided among various family members.” [ARCC, 6]

The document also notes that “When the deceased notoriously has requested cremation and the scattering of their ashes for reasons contrary to the Christian faith, **A CHRISTIAN FUNERAL MUST BE DENIED TO THAT PERSON ACCORDING TO THE NORMS OF THE LAW.**”

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS REGARDING CREMATION

1. IS THE FUNERAL MASS DIFFERENT WHEN CREMAINS ARE PRESENT?

The Funeral Mass begins at the doors of the Church when the cremains are present just like it does when a coffin is present. The cremains are sprinkled with holy water. The covering of the cremated remains with a pall, however, is omitted. A family member or another person may carry the cremated remains to the place in front of the altar.

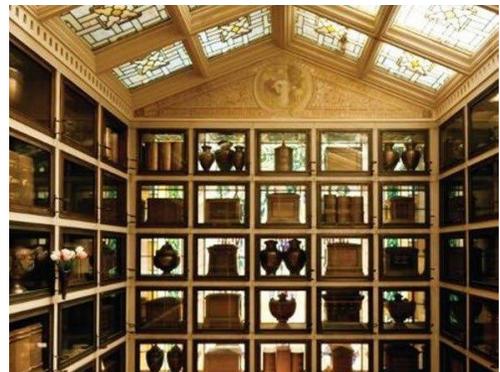
2. WHAT IS A COLUMBARIUM?



Many cemeteries have a building called a columbarium. It is an arrangement of niches, either in a mausoleum, a room or wall into which an urn or other worthy vessel is placed for permanent memorial.

3. WHAT IS A PROPER CONTAINER FOR THE CREMATED REMAINS?

The cremains should be placed in a worthy containers such as an urn or another worthy object. Jewelry, dishes, statuary and space capsules are examples of designer containers that are available but are considered to be **UNACCEPTABLE** for cremated remains.



4. MAY ANYTHING BE ADDED TO CREMATED REMAINS?

The comingling of cremains with another person or pet has not been an accepted practice in the Catholic Church. The Church has always respected that individuality of the baptized person before God.

5. WHAT BURIAL PRACTICES SHOULD BE AVOIDED?

The practice of a common grave, ground or niche where the cremated remains of several persons are scattered, poured, buried or combined without individual urns is to be completely avoided in Catholic cemeteries. Catholics should not select this practice for the final disposition of their mortal, cremated remains.

WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE IS DYING.



Do you know what to do when a loved one is dying? Many people have heard of the “Last Rites.” The Last Rites actually refers to the reception of three different sacraments:

- Sacrament of Reconciliation [Confession]
- Sacrament of Anointing
- Sacrament of Viaticum [Communion]

In ages past people often deferred receiving the sacraments until they were on their deathbed. This occurred for a variety of historical reasons. Ultimately these three separate sacraments were celebrated at the same time when a person was on their “death bed” and became referred to as the “Last Rites.”

Today, a person should frequently celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout their lives. When a person is seriously ill or dying, they may also want to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation at a time when they are physically able to do so.



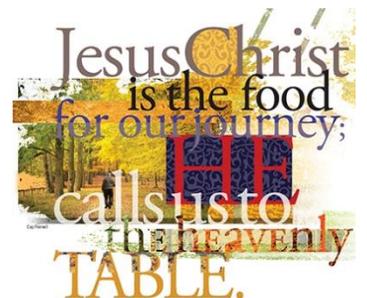
The sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is meant to be celebrated at any time when a person is facing a serious illness. In the past, when it was only celebrated when one was dying, it was oftentimes referred to as “Extreme Unction” – the last anointing. Today the Church has restored the meaning and purpose of the sacrament of anointing. We believe that the anointing heals us spiritually and can heal us physically. The celebration of the Anointing of the Sick should not be deferred until

someone is dying. [Watch The Most Misunderstood Sacrament:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7EJXgUcWVZM>

THE ACTUAL SACRAMENT OF THE DYING IS “VIATICUM.” The Church teaches that the anointing of the sick should be celebrated at the BEGINNING of an illness. If a dying person has already been anointed during their illness, the sacrament they should receive when death is close is Viaticum.

“The celebration of the eucharist as viaticum, food for the passage through death to eternal life, is the sacrament proper to the dying Christian. It is the completion and crown of the Christian life on this earth, signifying that the Christian follows the Lord to eternal glory and the banquet of the heavenly kingdom.” [Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum].



PRE-PLAN YOUR FUNERAL LITURGY

You may also pre-plan the funeral rites for yourself. Just make an appointment with Sr. Linda Gaupin, CDP. She will guide you through the process of pre-planning for one or more of the funeral rites. Phone: 407-699-5683 Ext. 251

PRAYERS AT THE TIME OF DEATH?



Many families desire the presence of a priest when a loved one first dies. If a loved one has already died, the priest [or deacon or lay minister] may come to the home to pray with the family and for the loved one who has died.

In this instance the Church provides special “Prayers After Death” and prayers for the “Gathering in the Presence of the Body” that a priest, deacon or other minister may use. The celebration of a sacrament is reserved for the living and therefore not celebrated if the person is already deceased.

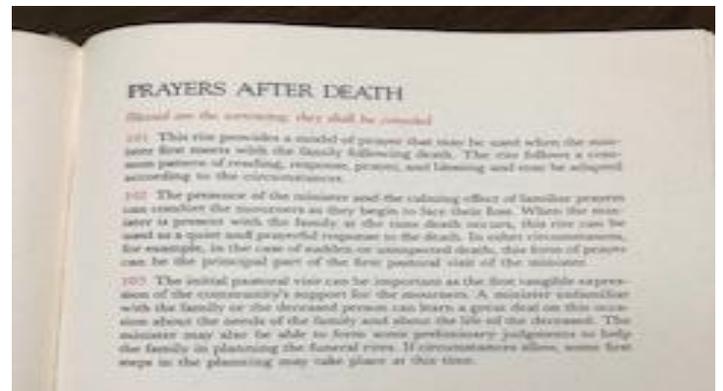
The Church urges great care and support for families who are experiencing the death of a loved one. The Order of Christian Funerals [OCF] states:

“The time immediately following death is often one of bewilderment and may involve shock or heartrending grief for the family and close friends. The ministry of the Church at this time is one of gently accompanying the mourners in their initial adjustment to the fact of death and to the sorrow this entails.” [OCF 52].

PRAYERS AFTER DEATH

The “Prayers After Death” provide comfort for those who mourn as they begin to face the loss of their loved one. The prayers can be used as a “quiet and prayerful response to death.”

The prayers follow our common Catholic prayer pattern of Invitation to Pray; reading from Scripture; response, prayer for the mourners and final blessing.



GATHERING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE BODY

Assuming that the family is not present at the time of death, this short rite provides for gathering them and praying as the domestic (and extended) Church. This usually takes place in the Funeral Home either before or after the body has been prepared. Through prayer the mourners feel the presence of the church community and the concern the church has for them. “In prayer and gesture those present show reverence for the body of the deceased as a temple of the life-giving Spirit and ask, in that same Spirit, for the eternal life promised to the faithful.” [OCF, 110].