



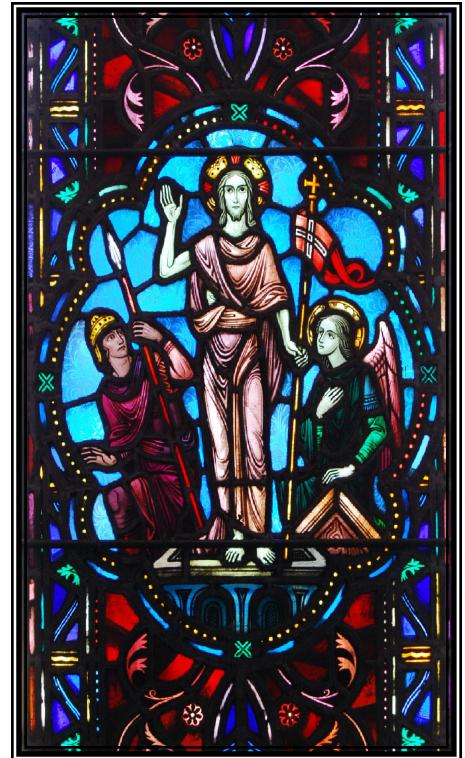
Church of Saint Mary

Bethel, Connecticut

Funeral Guidelines

During this difficult time, St. Mary Parish would like to do all we can to make your loved one's funeral a prayerful, comforting, dignified and memorable celebration of the Holy Eucharist. It is not always easy to know all the choices and possibilities available for the Rite of Christian Funeral, so hopefully this guide will help to make your choices easier.

We, as a Parish, encourage all Catholics to have a Funeral Mass. To pray for one's soul, to celebrate the Mass, to worship our God, to celebrate your loved one's life and to be comforted by God's grace and God's family is why we gather together for a funeral



The Church encourages a Vigil or Wake the day before the funeral Mass so that family and friends can gather for memories to be shared, prayers to be said, possibly tears to be shed and to gather as one to honor the beloved and bring a sense of comfort and peace to all gathered.

After the Funeral Mass, the Church tells us that our loved one, their mortal remains should be buried with dignity and respect. St. Mary Cemetery is a wonderful and sacred place to have a loved one rest until the Resurrection at the end of time.

To foster peace of mind, these choices and guidelines are offered with gentleness and compassion.

For the Funeral Mass there are many options that may be chosen by the family. It is **IMPORTANT** to say that if the family cannot make these choices, St. Mary Parish would be honored to make these choices with you and your loved one in mind.

◆ **Music.** Music can lift us in prayer, inspire us to worship God, strike memories in our hearts and bring a sense of peace to our souls. Because we are worshipping our loving God, the music chosen for the Church service must be religious. The wake and the cemetery are perfect times to offer old time family favorite musical selections, national hymns/anthems or modern songs that strike a cord in one's heart.

Our music director Michael Ferrari would be very happy to help you with selections, and our clergy are always available to help in this process. We wholeheartedly encourage that our Music Director presents the music and one of our cantors sings at the Funeral Liturgy. If there is an extreme reason why our Music Director is not used, his normal fee must be paid.

So what is needed if **you** choose to pick music? (You may choose music that is marked by an asterisk.)

Entrance Hymn*

Responsorial Psalm

Offertory Hymn*

Communion Hymn*

The Song of Farewell (sung during the incensation)

The In Paradisium (sung as the Casket leaves the Church)

Recessional hymn*

◆ **The Scripture Readings:** The family may pick the 1st & 2nd Scripture Readings and may proclaim them at the Funeral Mass. Normally, there is an Old Testament Reading and a New Testament Reading. The celebrant will choose an appropriate Gospel. The readings are chosen from the Funeral Liturgy Book that can be found at the Funeral Home. You may choose the readings and have the clergy proclaim the readings, or you may choose readers yourself. Remember, this is an emotional time so the readers should be chosen according to their ability to read at the Funeral Mass.



◆ All choices are to be recorded on the Funeral Guidance sheet that is attached.

◆ The Parish will provide copies of the Readings and place them in a Funeral binder for the convenience of the Readers.

◆ **At Offertory Time**, 2 gift bearers may bring the bread and wine to the altar. They will follow the cross bearer and bring the gifts to the priest celebrant.

◆ If members of the family need the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) prior to the funeral in order that they may receive Holy Communion at the funeral Mass, please check the box on the guideline sheet.

◆ If the family would like to offer some "Words of Remembrance" this would occur after the Prayer following Communion. We encourage a written remembrance done by one person, with its duration being between 3 to 5 minutes long. Once again, this is a most emotional time so adhering to a written copy will add to the ease of the moment. Though humorous stories, anecdotes and personal remembrances are important, words that are shared should be words that are appropriate for a Church.

◆ Our Parish Hall is often available for a luncheon after the funeral. If the family would like to use it, the Parish Bereavement Group would be happy to help. To help defray costs, a suggested donation is \$300.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your understanding. In all ways acknowledge Him and he will direct your paths."

Proverbs 3:5-6

Saint Mary Parish Funeral Guideline

Name of Deceased Loved One _____

(If there is a name you would like the clergy to use during the Funeral other than his/her baptismal name, please include it).

Next of kin and their relationship to the Faithfully Departed:

Will **you** choose sacred music for the funeral? Yes No

(If you prefer to choose music, please call St. Mary Music Director, Michael Ferrari at (860-424-7608) to make the proper arrangements.)

Would you prefer our **Music Director** to choose appropriate sacred music? Yes No

Will **you** choose special Scripture Readings for the Funeral Mass? Yes No

Would you prefer the **clergy** to choose appropriate Scripture Readings for the Funeral Mass?

Yes No

If **you** are choosing special Scripture Readings, please include the Scripture Reading citations, so that we can have copies of the readings at the Pulpit for the readers.

Old Testament citation _____

Name of Reader _____

New Testament citation _____

Name of Reader _____

The **Clergy** will choose the Gospel.

Will the family bring the gifts to the altar at the Offertory? Yes No

Names of the family members: _____

After the Prayer following Communion, there is an opportunity for "**Words of Remembrance**." If you choose to have "Words of Remembrance" we ask that there would be only **One** presenter, that the words be written and they would be of a duration between 3 to 5 minutes long. If there will be "Words of Remembrance," please have the presenter contact the Priest celebrating the Funeral Mass. The words and content should be appropriate for the Celebration of Mass.

Will you have "Words of Remembrance"? Yes No

Name of Speaker: _____

We hope that in preparing for your Loved One's Funeral, the journey that we all walk from life to death to eternal life will be one filled with God's blessings and God's peace.