

## **Funeral Ministry Church of St. Mary, Le Center, MN**

*Christians celebrate the funeral rites to offer worship, praise, and thanksgiving to God for the gift of a life which has now been returned to God, the author of life and the hope of the just. The Mass, the memorial of Christ's death and resurrection, is the principal celebration of the Christian funeral.*

~ Order of Christian Funerals

**The death of a loved one is a difficult time for families. At St. Mary, our commitment is to assist the family of the deceased in preparing a meaningful celebration of life both on earth and eternal life.**

### **Funeral Procedures at St. Mary**

#### ***After the death of your loved one:***

**Contact the parish office at 507-357-6633.** When the parish office is closed, please follow the prompts for an emergency, to avoid delays. We will work with you and your funeral director to schedule the funeral, based on the availability of our facilities and clergy. It is our policy that funerals take precedence over most other activities.

The normal time for funerals is 10:00 AM weekday mornings. Due to the extensive use of the church on evenings and Saturdays for parish needs, evening funerals are not scheduled and Saturday funerals should be considered an exception. No Mass of Christian Burial or Memorial Mass may be scheduled on Sundays, Feast Days, or during the Paschal Triduum (Holy Thursday evening through Easter Sunday).

Families usually meet with the funeral director first and confirm arrangements. Family members then contact the funeral coordinators to plan the liturgy (readings, music, and other details), and meet with the priest who will preside at the funeral.

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#### ***Visitation:***

The most commonly chosen schedule for visitation includes two to three hours at the funeral home on the evening before the funeral liturgy, which may include a Vigil Service if desired. St. Mary offers one hour of gathering/visitation for the public, prior to the funeral Mass. The family is welcome to arrive half an hour before the public. If the family desires an extended visitation time, we suggest they utilize the services of a funeral home with the facilities and staffing to accommodate their needs.

## Funeral Liturgy Planning

The celebration of the Christian funeral brings hope and consolation to those that are grieving. Here are some of the choices you'll be invited to make for your loved one's Funeral Liturgy:

### ***Funeral Readings***

Please use the booklet found in your packet titled *Scripture Readings* for a list of suggested readings that are appropriate for use at Catholic Funeral Liturgies. One reading is chosen from each the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Gospels. (Other Scripture passages may be used on approval by the presiding Priest.)

### ***Music***

Music is integral to the funeral rites. The music at funerals should support, console and uplift the participants and should help to create in them a spirit of hope in Christ's victory over death and in the Christian's share in that victory.

We encourage families to select the music for the funeral liturgy with the assistance of the funeral coordinator and choir director. Music selections for the funeral Mass should be suitable to the sacred nature of the funeral service. Church of St. Mary musicians will provide music for all funerals. If a family requests, additional soloists or instrumentalists may be added – contact Terri McMillen to use the microphone (507-420-5877).

**Because of the sacredness of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, secular instrumental or vocal music, or the use of recorded music of any kind may not be used.** It is very appropriate to use this type of music at the mortuary during the wake/visitation.

The list of hymns found in this packet offers appropriate selections, most of which are found in our parish hymnal. Our parish Senior Choir has practiced these songs and will be present to lead the congregation in song.

### ***Liturgical Roles***

We encourage family members or friends to fill these roles:

**Readers** (Old Testament, New Testament, Prayers of the Faithful) We suggest choosing someone who is familiar with the Catholic Mass, and can proclaim clearly and is comfortable in front of large groups of people. Be sure to give them a copy of the reading in advance (If needed, the parish office is happy to help with this). On arrival, the funeral assistant or presiding priest will acquaint the readers with the use of our microphones.

### **Gift Bearers**

Two or more people carry up the bread and wine for the Preparation of Gifts.

### **Extraordinary Ministers/Eucharistic Ministers**

St. Mary communion ministers are available, unless the family has communion ministers who wish to serve. Be sure to notify the funeral coordinator. They must be Catholic, and trained and commissioned from their home parish.

### **Remembrance**

One family member is welcome to share Words of Remembrance following communion, with a suggested 3-5 minute maximum. If additional eulogizing is desired, we suggest these be done either at the wake service at the funeral home, or in the Social Hall during the funeral luncheon.

**Please use the *Liturgy Planning Checklist*, in your funeral planning packet to record all of your above selections. This will ensure that all liturgy selections have been made and all liturgy positions are filled.**

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## **Rite of Committal**

Burial is scheduled according to the requirements of the cemetery chosen by the family. The preferred time for a burial is following the funeral liturgy or the luncheon, in which case a priest will accompany the family to the cemetery for the Rite of Committal. This rite does not require a priest and may also be done by a deacon or lay person. If burial is delayed (i.e. due to cremation following the funeral, or prohibiting weather), please contact the parish for pastoral presence when the burial is scheduled.

**If a gravesite needs to be purchased from the Calvary Cemetery in Le Center, please contact the St. Mary's parish office as soon as possible.** Once the plot location is chosen, there needs to be adequate time for the grave location to be marked and dug. Calvary Cemetery fees can be found in your funeral planning packet.

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## **Funeral Luncheon Ministry**

We, at Church of St. Mary, want to do everything possible to support your family. It is for this reason that our Funeral Luncheon Committee will serve a lunch after the funeral. The funeral luncheon gives those who have come to pay their respects the opportunity to gather together to support each other and to share their memories of the deceased. More information is provided on the sheet in your packet.

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## **Funeral Fees at St. Mary**

There is a fee of \$150 for the use of the Social Hall for the funeral luncheon. This charge covers the janitorial set-up and clean-up, bathroom paper products, and other building costs incurred. This fee is paid to the parish and is not a donation to the Funeral Luncheon Committee.

\$70 to cover the cost of lights, candles, incense, and administrative costs. (Check is made out to Church of St. Mary)

\$65 Organist Fee (Check is made out to organist)

\$65 Senior Choir Fee (Check is made out to Senior Choir – do not include the name of St. Mary's Church)

## **Contact Information**

Fr. James Stiles, Pastor, 507-357-6633

Fr. Tim Sandquist, Associate Pastor, 507-357-6633

Gloria Wolf, Secretary 507-357-6633 – Formats & prints funeral programs, assists in funeral planning, facilitates burial at Calvary Cemetery, Le Center

Ruth Germscheid, Funeral Choir Director, 507-357-6421 – Contact with song choices and questions

Terri McMillen, Parish Choir Director, 507-420-5877 – Contact if a soloist will need to use a microphone

Fran Christian, Funeral Luncheon Committee Coordinator, 507-357-6301 – Contact to make luncheon arrangements

## **Commonly Asked Questions about Funerals:**

### **What is the difference between a Mass of Christian Burial and a Memorial Mass?**

A Mass of Christian Burial takes place with the remains of the deceased person present.

A Memorial Mass/Service is held in memory of the deceased person, but no remains are present.

### **What does the Catholic Church say about cremation?**

Cremation is accepted by the Roman Catholic Church. It is preferred that the body of the deceased be present at the funeral liturgy and cremation take place afterward, but it is also acceptable for the cremation to take place first and the cremains to be present at the funeral liturgy. The Catholic Church requires that the cremains be buried, or interred, as a whole following the funeral, just as a body would be interred.

Additional information regarding Cremation can be found in your packet.