



**OUR LADY OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT**
PARISH

FUNERAL LITURGY PREPARATION



Dear Friend,

Please accept our heartfelt condolences on the loss of your loved one. In our family of faith, no one walks alone. Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Parish Bereavement Ministry is a group of caring, dedicated individuals ready to walk with you and help guide you through planning the funeral liturgy.

We know this is a tender time, and our hope is to accompany you with compassion, prayer and support. As we prepare together, we gently recall that the Funeral Mass is a sacred celebration, a solemn affirmation of our faith in God's mercy and in the promise of the resurrection. It is both a time to grieve and a time to place our trust in the hope Christ offers us.

Please don't feel overwhelmed by information, and don't hesitate to reach out. We are here for you, and it will be our honor to walk this part of the journey with you.



Overview

We understand that the time following the loss of a loved one can be overwhelming. There are many decisions to be made and details to manage. We hope this guide offers clarity and comfort as you navigate the planning process and lean on the support of our parish community.

The Catholic Funeral is a beautiful and prayerful tradition that honors the life of the deceased while commending their soul to God's eternal care. It consists of three distinct parts, each with its own rites and associated prayers:

1. **The Wake (Vigil for the Deceased)** – A time for family and friends to gather in prayer, share memories and offer support. This is often held the evening before the Funeral Mass and includes Scripture readings, intercessions, the Rosary or other devotional prayers. A funeral director can help you with the arrangements, and Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament will try to arrange for a priest or Bereavement Minister to pray the Liturgy of the Word.
2. **The Funeral Liturgy** – Most commonly celebrated as a Mass, this is the central liturgical celebration, where we entrust our loved one to God's mercy, seek comfort in the Eucharist and affirm our hope in the Resurrection. Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Bereavement Ministry will help guide you in planning the Funeral Mass.
3. **The Committal** – Held at the cemetery or place of burial, this final rite is a solemn farewell, marking the physical separation while expressing our belief in the promise of eternal life. A funeral director can help you with the arrangements, and Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament will try to arrange for a priest to come for the Committal Rite.

Burial or Cremation

The Catholic Church holds great reverence for the human body as a temple of the Holy Spirit and encourages the entombment or burial of the body whenever possible. However, if cremation is chosen for honorable reasons, the Church fully supports this decision.

When should cremation take place?

Ideally, cremation should occur *after* the Funeral Liturgy so that the body may be present for the full funeral rites, reflecting our belief in the dignity of the human body and the hope of resurrection.

If this is not possible, cremation may take place beforehand, but arrangements should be made to have the cremated remains present in a dignified urn during the liturgy.

When should the cremated body be interred?

The cremated remains should be interred (buried or placed in a columbarium) *immediately following the funeral liturgy or as soon as possible* once the remains are returned. The Rite of Committal is a vital part of the Catholic Funeral and should be celebrated to honor the deceased and commend them to God's care.

We understand that in some cases cremated remains are not interred immediately; when the committal is held at a later date, our priests or deacon are happy to offer prayers, and a \$45 stipend is requested for this additional service.

Can cremated remains be “scattered” or divided between multiple urns?

The Catholic Church emphasizes the sanctity of the human body, believing it is destined for resurrection. Therefore, cremated remains should be treated with the same reverence and respect as a full body. Cremated remains should be placed in a single, sacred space to honor the deceased and provide a focal point for grieving and remembrance. The Church prohibits scattering cremated remains, whether in the air, on land, or at sea, as well as keeping them at home or dividing them among family members.

Funeral Mass, Memorial Mass, Celebration of Life and Mass Intention

A **Funeral Mass** is the central liturgy of the Catholic funeral, celebrated with the body present (either coffin or cremated remains). It includes special prayers and rites that commend the soul of the deceased to God's mercy, honor the sacredness of the body, and offer hope in the Resurrection. The Funeral Mass recognizes the traditional teachings of the Catholic Church and honors the religious aspects of our Catholic faith.

While "**Celebrations of Life**" have become very popular and can be a beautiful way to share memories and honor a loved one, it's important to understand that they are not the same as a Catholic funeral liturgy. As noted, the Funeral Mass is a sacred act of worship centered on Christ, the Word of God, and the Eucharist, entrusting the soul of the deceased to God's mercy. A Funeral Mass requires the presence of the body, whether in a coffin or as cremated remains, as a sign of respect for the person created in God's image. A Celebration of Life, on the other hand, does not require the presence of the body and is not a liturgical celebration. It's best suited for the funeral home or the luncheon that follows, where family and friends can share stories, photos, and personal tributes freely. Both have their place and can beautifully complement one another in honoring a life lived in faith.

A **Memorial Mass** may be requested when the body or remains are not present, or to mark a special moment of remembrance, such as the *one-year anniversary of death*, a custom observed in many cultures. This is a full Mass, and you must contact our parish office to schedule. Our Bereavement Ministry will be happy to assist you in selecting appropriate readings and hymns.

A **Mass Intention** is another way we remember the deceased, by praying for them during the **Prayer of the Faithful** at daily or Sunday Mass. When we learn of a death in our parish family, the person's name is automatically included in the **Prayer of the Faithful for the Deceased**, typically once, shortly after their passing.

If you would like to request additional Mass Intentions, please contact the parish office. Our staff will help you choose an available date to pray for the eternal soul of your loved one. Please note that certain liturgies may be reserved for communal intentions or parish observances, and limits may apply on the number of intentions that can be scheduled for specific Masses. **Please note**, that the parish book generally opens in September or October annually and the usual donation for a Mass Intention is \$10.

Setting the Date

To begin planning a funeral or memorial liturgy, we ask that you first contact the parish office. Our staff will gather the necessary information and help connect you with a member of our Bereavement Ministry, who will walk with you through the planning process.

These liturgies are generally scheduled in the late morning, typically at 10:00am or 11:00am, Monday through Saturday. Please note the following scheduling guidelines:

- **Saturdays:** Queen of the Rosary Church is reserved for Eucharistic Adoration, so funerals are scheduled at St. Julian Eymard Church.
- **Wednesdays:** St. Julian Eymard Church is reserved for Eucharistic Adoration, so funerals are scheduled at Queen of the Rosary Church.
- **Holy Days and Easter Triduum:** Funeral liturgies cannot be celebrated on Holy Days of Obligation or during the Easter Triduum (Holy Thursday through Easter Sunday).

Other factors, such as clergy availability or cemetery scheduling, may also affect the date and time. Our staff will do their best to help coordinate a date that works for all involved.



Funeral Liturgy Preparation

What Is the Family Meeting?

A Bereavement Minister will reach out to schedule a family meeting to prepare the Funeral Liturgy for your loved one. To help prepare for that meeting (and depending on the family's preference and comfort with technology), the Bereavement Minister can email the appropriate materials for a Funeral Mass at Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. You should be contacted within one day of scheduling your loved one's Funeral Liturgy, but if you are not contacted, please connect with our parish office.

Who Should Attend?

The closest next of kin—or the person entrusted to make decisions regarding the Funeral Liturgy—should be present. Others who wish to offer support are welcome, too. Please consider: while input from family and friends is meaningful, too many voices can sometimes make it difficult to reach a decision with clarity and peace.

What Should We Bring?

Please bring an open heart and memories of your loved one to share.

What Will We Discuss?

We'll begin with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide our time together. Then we'll reflect on your loved one's life, especially their faith—favorite saints, devotions or any special memories.

We will also choose Scripture readings and music for the liturgy. The Word of God is a source of consolation, and your Bereavement Minister will help you select an Old and New Testament reading plus the Intercessions or Prayer of the Faithful. Your Bereavement Minister will also ask you to select a reader for each, along with other roles such as Pall Bearers, placing of the pall, bringing up the gifts or acting as Eucharistic Ministers (must be trained for this role). If you do not have a reader, please let your Bereavement Minister know and the ministry will provide readers. The presider will select and proclaim the Gospel reading.

Our Music Director has curated a selection of sacred music appropriate for the Funeral Mass, including music for the Psalm. These selections are meant to support and uplift the assembly in prayer and hope. While requests outside this selection may be considered, they must be liturgically appropriate and approved by the Music Director.

Please Note:

- **Music in the Funeral Mass** should always give praise to God and express our Christian hope in the Resurrection—it is not meant to be a personal tribute.
- **Pre-recorded music is not permitted during the liturgy.** The Church invites us to rely on the living voices of the faithful in communal prayer.
- **Secular music is not appropriate for the Funeral Mass.** If you wish to include it, we suggest saving it for a wake, visitation or post-funeral gathering.

Our goal is to walk with you during this time of grief, and to help you plan a liturgy that honors your loved one's faith and brings comfort to all who gather to pray.

Visiting Clergy and Musicians

We warmly welcome visiting clergy and musicians to participate in the Funeral Liturgy, and we are grateful for the comfort they can offer to grieving families.

Clergy

If a priest or deacon who is a family member or close friend has been invited to celebrate or assist with the liturgy, please notify our parish office as soon as possible.

- Catholic clergy from outside the Archdiocese of Chicago must provide a **letter of good standing** in advance, as required by Archdiocesan policy. This should be sent to Archdiocese of Chicago, Office of Canonical Affairs, 835 North Rush Street, Chicago, IL 60611-2030.
- Clergy or ministers from other faith denominations are welcome to attend and pray with the assembly. However, in accordance with Catholic liturgical norms, they are not permitted to preach or minister from the sanctuary during the Mass.

Musicians

Visiting musicians, including family or friends, are welcome **at the discretion of the Music Director**. Please understand that certain practical concerns must be considered:

- Not all musicians are familiar with the structure of the Mass or the liturgical requirements.
- Instrumentation and equipment may differ from what they're used to.
- Even experienced musicians may find it emotionally challenging to perform in a moment of personal grief.

Our Music Director is here to support and guide all musicians involved to ensure the dignity and prayerfulness of the liturgy are preserved. Please contact Mr. Paul Van Lysebettens at pvanlysebettens@archchicago.org or (847) 979-0901 x1006.

Additional Considerations

Receiving Holy Communion

In keeping with our Catholic faith and practice, Holy Communion is received by baptized Catholics who are in a state of grace (free from mortal sin) and have observed the Eucharistic fast. You are welcome to receive either in the hand or on the tongue.

If you, family members, or other guests are not receiving Communion, you are invited to come forward for a blessing. Simply cross your arms over your chest as a sign to the priest or minister. Whether you receive the Eucharist or a blessing, know that you are an important part of this time of prayer and remembrance.

Eulogies

While eulogies are not a part of the Catholic Funeral Liturgy, please know that your loved one will be prayerfully remembered during the liturgy. The celebrant's homily will reflect on the promise of eternal life through Christ, and may include meaningful aspects of your loved one's life as appropriate to the sacred context of the Mass.

We understand how important it is to share stories, memories, and personal reflections. A beautiful time to do this is at the Vigil or Wake service, or during a luncheon or gathering following the Funeral Liturgy and Committal. These moments offer a more fitting and personal setting to honor and celebrate your loved one's unique life and legacy.

Flowers

Flowers are a beautiful and thoughtful way to honor a loved one and bring comfort to grieving hearts. To ensure they are properly received and placed, we kindly ask that all floral arrangements be *delivered on the day of the Funeral Liturgy*. This helps prevent any items from being misplaced or damaged in advance.

Families are welcome to take flowers home after the service. Any arrangements that remain will be respectfully repurposed or disposed of at the discretion of our parish Art & Environment team, who lovingly care for our worship spaces.

Military and/or Cultural Traditions

As previously mentioned, the Funeral Mass is a liturgical celebration of our Catholic faith. While military service or cultural rituals such as bagpipes may be recognized, depending on the family and their deceased loved one, they are not part of the formal Funeral Mass. These unique elements should be discussed with the Bereavement Minister on how, when, and where they may be observed.

Worship Aids

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Parish does not provide personalized worship aids for Funeral or Memorial liturgies. It is the family's responsibility to create, print, and bring these aids to the Funeral Mass. Bereavement Ministers will be happy to help distribute them to attendees.

Donations

We are a community built on compassion, understanding, and respect. The sacraments are a sacred gift from God to His people, and as such, there is never a charge for receiving them.

However, it is customary to offer a donation to the parish and to those who assist with the Funeral Liturgy as a gesture of gratitude and support. Typical donations are as follows:

- \$400 for the parish
- \$75 for each musician
- \$10 for altar servers (When possible, 1-3 students from our QR School act as altar servers. Their availability may not be confirmed until the last minute and we ask you to be prepared at the Funeral Mass with several small bills to cover this gratuity.)
- We understand that in some cases cremated remains are not interred immediately; when the committal is held at a later date, our priests or deacon are happy to offer prayers, and a \$45 stipend is requested for this additional service.

We understand that each family's circumstances are unique. If you have any questions or need to make alternate arrangements, please don't hesitate to contact our parish office.

Going Forward

Grief does not end with the Funeral Mass and Christian Burial Rite. In addition to Mass Intentions (mentioned previously), Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Parish offers additional and ongoing opportunities to celebrate your loved one's passing and support the family with their loss. These opportunities include our annual All Souls Remembrance Mass and our Journey of the Heart Grief Share Group.

All Souls Remembrance Mass

Celebrated on November 2nd, the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed provides the opportunity to pray for and remember all those who have died, especially those who have passed in the previous year. Along with the regular Masses of the day, a special Mass is specifically offered. The family of those who have been buried from Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament Parish in the previous year will receive an invitation to attend.

Journey of the Heart

The pain of mourning can be a heavy burden to bear alone. And, while each grief journey is unique and individual, kindred feelings can flow among those who know devastating loss firsthand. Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament offers a process of healing. Journey of the Heart (JOTH) is a six-week program that links the bereaved with the Church, other parishioners of faith, and Almighty God. For more information, contact the parish office.

Mass Intention

Please refer to page 4 for more information.



OUR LADY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH

 OLBSEGV.org  (847) 979-0901  OLBSEGV@archchicago.org  /OLBSEGV

Fr. Arthur Bautista, Pastor
(847) 979-0901 X1013
arbautista@archchicago.org

Fr. Paul Àdajà, Assoc. Pastor
(847) 979-0901 X1009
padaja@archchicago.org

Mr. Jerrold Szostak, Deacon
(847) 979-0901 X1008
jszostak@archchicago.org

Worship Sites

Queen of the Rosary
750 W. Elk Grove Blvd.
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

St. Julian Eymard
601 Biesterfield Road
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

School

Queen of the Rosary School
690 Elk Grove Blvd.
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
QRSchool.org