

St. Anthony of Padua

CATHOLIC CHURCH



Planning the Funeral Liturgy

A guide for the Liturgical Rites of the Catholic Church
at the time of a death of a loved one.

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Grant us, with all who have died in the hope of resurrection, to have our consummation and bliss in thy eternal and everlasting glory, and with the blessed Virgin Mary and all thy saints, to receive the crown of life which thou dost promise to all who share in the victory of thy Son Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

A Word of Welcome

You have received this booklet because you are planning ahead for your own funeral or because you are responsible for planning the funeral of a loved one. Please accept the condolences on the part of the clergy and staff of St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church for the loss of your loved one and be assured of the prayers of our parish family. Here at St. Anthony's, we believe that it is a Corporal Work of Mercy to bury the dead with honor, dignity and devotion.

Every November 2nd we celebrate a Solemn Mass on All Souls' Day for the repose of the souls of every person who has been buried from our church in the previous year. We have a Book of the Dead that enables the faithful to record the names of those who have died, and so that our Mass will be offered for them. We hope and pray that this parish may be of continual support for you as you plan this funeral.

The Catholic Way of Death

In the preface for the Funeral Mass, the priest prays, "For your faithful people, LORD, life is changed, not ended." Every man and woman is created in the image and likeness of God and every human life is sacred and willed by God. The moment when we pass from death to the after life is a great mystery, and the Church surrounds her children in that moment with hope and love.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life, says the LORD. He who believes in me, though he die, shall live" (John 11:25). Every Sunday in the Creed the Church sings, "I believe in the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." We have faith that we will rise with Him on the last Day, and that at the end of your earthly life we shall each appear before Christ, the Merciful and Just Judge, who will judge us according to our merits. Because on this Earth, none can know what that decree will be, to eternal life or eternal death, we surround the dead with prayers.

The central act with which the Church surrounds the dead and their families is the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Because the Eucharist is seen as the font of immortality, the Church celebrates Mass for the living and the dead. The central rite which accompanies the dead is the Funeral Mass. It is not a celebration of the life of the dead, or a moment to comfort those left behind. It is a powerful encounter with the Mystery of Christ's triumph over death by His Resurrection through prayer and the sacraments.

A medieval chant sang, "In the midst of life we are in death." We do not know when our last moment shall be, and so every moment should be spent in view of eternity with God. We should endeavor to avoid sin, do good, and live faithful to Christ and His Church at every moment. That is the best way to prepare for death and for our entry into eternal friendship with God.

Funerals at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church

Funeral of Unbaptized Children

The Church commends the souls of unbaptized children to God. If a child has died without the sacrament of Baptism, there is a special formulary of prayer and burial for that child. The rite may also include prayers of blessing and comfort for the parents and those left behind.

Funeral of Baptized Children Under the Age of Reason

In the case of those children who are baptized, but under the age of reason (around age 7), the Church traditionally celebrates the Mass of the Angels in white vestments. Because the Church is sure of the child's presence in paradise as a saint, the liturgical celebration of such a funeral is marked by a more joyful character.

Funeral of Adults

After the age of reason, a person is considered an adult for the purpose of planning a funeral. There is a tendency today to see a funeral as an incredibly sad occasion which should be gotten over and done with as soon as possible. For Catholics, however, it is a moment of profound prayer and contemplation.

The Order of Christian Funerals has three stations reflecting the earthly pilgrimage and the journey to Heaven for the followers of Jesus Christ: The Vigil at the Funeral Home, the Funeral Mass at the Church and The Final Commendation and Burial at the Cemetery.

The Vigil

It is traditional that the night before the Funeral Mass, a Vigil is celebrated. The Vigil can be celebrated in the home during a visitation of the family, or at the funeral home. We encourage families to have a visitation in the Funeral Home with a vigil.

The Vigil may take several forms. A deacon may come to the funeral home and celebrate the Vigil as contained in the liturgical books of the Roman Rite. A Deacon or lay Catholic may also come and pray the Holy Rosary with the family. The family may also choose to have a visitation and a Vigil that they organize on their own. It is appropriate and most fitting at such a Vigil to have eulogies or speeches commemorating the deceased.

The Funeral Mass

The Funeral Mass is celebrated according to the liturgical books of the Roman Rite. A Funeral Mass can be celebrated at St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church Monday through Friday at 11am or 1 pm. Funerals are generally held in the Our Lady of the Angels Chapel.

The funeral always begins with a recollection of the deceased's baptism. For in baptism, we are all born into our life with Christ. Remembering our baptism by the sprinkling of the remains, be they cremated or not, we recall that we have entered into life with Christ and that the passing from this life to the next is a transition. The clothing with the funeral pall is another baptismal symbol and a strong sign of resurrection. Finally, the Paschal Candle burns bright giving us a sign of the presence of Christ here in our midst. Although there is sadness in parting, we cling to the hope and assurance that we will be together with the angels and saints in paradise. We never lose sight of the promise that Jesus "goes before us to prepare a place for us."

For this reason, we choose music that clearly reflects and affirms what we as Roman Catholics believe about the promise of life everlasting and the glory to come. The Church has given us clear guidelines about what is and what is not appropriate. Trust in the ministers to assist you in choosing music that will honor the deceased and strongly proclaim our hope, our faith, and our joy in the resurrection. For these reasons we must sing some texts that are themselves the prayers of the funeral mass. Likewise, there are other songs that would be better suited for a time when the family gathers informally, for example after the funeral when people come together to share a meal and memories of the deceased. Please allow the staff of St. Anthony of Padua to assist you in choosing meaningful, dignified, and beautiful music for these sacred moments of prayer. What is sacred belongs in the Church itself. What is not sacred is better suited for another time and place.

The overall effect of this Funeral Mass is not dreadful, nor is it terrifying. It is truth telling. This ritual does not avert its eyes from the mysteries of life and death and the beautiful hope offered by the graces of the sacrament. To attend this most Sacred Liturgy is painful in the way that discovering truth always is, but it is also comforting.

The Rite of Committal

The Rite of Committal takes place after the Funeral Mass. There is normally an immediate procession to the cemetery and there the final prayers of the church are offered. If burial is delayed or in the case of cremation, the Rite of Committal is offered at the time of interment.

The Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass

When the funeral takes place at the funeral home, the Rite of the Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass is offered. The rites remain the same with the exception that the Liturgy of the Eucharist is omitted.

Cremation

Cremation is permissible for Catholics only if it is not chosen for motives against the faith or as a denial of the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body. We discourage cremation, as it can tend to encourage a cavalier attitude towards the remains of the dead, which are often not disposed of properly. Cremation should take place after the Funeral Mass, although the Funeral Mass can be celebrated in the presence of cremated remains. The cremated remains must be treated with the same respect as a body to be buried. It is not permitted for them to be scattered, divided, or made into anything. They should all be gathered in one dignified, waterproof receptacle. The cremated remains should be enclosed in the niche of a columbarium.

Scripture Readings

The family is invited to choose from among the designated selections for the First and Second Readings, the Responsorial Psalm, and the Gospel when completing the Funeral Request & Liturgy Selection form.

<https://ap.churchcenter.com/people/forms/131314> if you are planning for a loved one.

<https://ap.churchcenter.com/people/forms/131290> if you are pre-planning for yourself.

The First Reading is selected from the Old Testament, except during the Easter Season when a selection from Acts or Revelation is offered. The Second Reading is selected from the New Testament.

Full text of the readings in a printable format may be found on the parish website. <https://ap.church/funerals>

While the family chooses the readings for the Funeral Mass, St. Anthony's parish has trained Lectors who will proclaim the Word of God during the Liturgy. In this way, the family can be attentive to the Word of God, and not feel burdened with seeking to find someone to read that may be uncomfortable, or not know how to proclaim the Word of God within the Sacred Liturgy. The Responsorial Psalm is sung by the cantor.

Non-biblical texts may not replace the scripture readings at a funeral mass.

Music

Music plays an important part in the Funeral Mass and adds to the great beauty and solemnity to the prayers of the church. The parish music department provides an accompanist and vocalist and arranges the appropriate liturgical music for the Funeral Mass.

Hymn selections for the Funeral Mass can be made when completing the Funeral Request & Liturgy Selection form. <https://ap.churchcenter.com/people/forms/131314>

Stipends and Fees

There is no charge for the church or chapel for a funeral at St Anthony of Padua Catholic Church. A customary honorarium may be offered to the clergy by the family.

Music is an integral part of our Catholic tradition and is essential, especially for a Funeral Mass and will be provided with a mandatory charge of \$150 for the vocalist and \$150 for the accompanist.

Checks can be made out to St Anthony of Padua Catholic Church (or cash can be given). Stipends are to be given to Deacon Scott Broussard or the Sacristan on the day of the Funeral Mass.

Eulogies

The homily at the Funeral Mass is one that focuses on the Scripture readings and the themes of Christian hope and the significance of our salvation in Jesus Christ. Therefore, eulogies are not part of the Catholic Funeral Liturgy. Remembrance of the deceased may be given as part of the vigil service the evening before.

Live Stream

Unfortunately, The Our Lady of the Angels Chapel does not have the ability to live stream.