

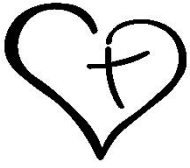
*“Be sure of this; I am with  
you always, even to the  
ends of the age.”  
Matthew 28:20*



# GUIDELINES AND READINGS FOR FUNERALS



**DIOCESE OF FERNS**



## **To Those who are Bereaved**

On this sorrowful day, please know that the hearts of your entire parish family are with you. Your clergy and lay pastoral ministers offer you their deepest sympathy and support as you walk through this valley of grief.

As a faith community, we stand quietly beside you, holding you gently in our prayers. We remember you and your loved ones each day before the Lord.

In the light of Christ's Resurrection, we hold fast to the hope that those who die in faith pass from this life into a fuller, deeper and more joyful life with God. In the days ahead, your local clergy, lay pastoral ministers or funeral director will walk with you as you prepare the funeral liturgy, helping to plant this comforting truth more deeply in your heart and soul, and offering you gentle strength for the road that lies before you.

*"Be sure of this; I am with you always, even to the ends of the age" Matthew 28:20*

## **The Evening Before the Funeral Service**

It is natural to want to remember and tell stories about the one who has died - the good times, the shared laughter and the love you knew. The Wake creates a gentle space for family and friends to gather around the body of your loved one. This can take place at home or in the funeral home. This may include the Rosary and a time for personal remembrances, favourite prayers, poems or the quiet sharing of stories.

The Wake often ends with the 'Vigil for the Deceased'. This includes Scripture readings and prayers that speak of our Christian hope in the Resurrection, while also giving voice to the pain of loss. It can be led by a priest, deacon, religious or lay minister.

In this intimate setting, your family gathers in the presence of your loved one to begin absorbing the reality of your loss with the support of prayer. The Vigil also offers a special opportunity for friends, neighbours and extended family who may not be able to attend the Service the next day to come, pay their respects and join you in prayer.

## **Trained Lay Pastoral Ministers**

In the life of our parish, trained lay pastoral ministers are a great blessing. When a priest or deacon is not available due to scheduling or other pastoral demands, they are authorised by the Church to lead certain funeral rites. Lay ministers may beautifully lead the Vigil and the Rite of Committal at the cemetery or crematorium.

The Vigil offers the family the comfort of Sacred Scripture, heartfelt prayer and the loving presence of the faith community. The Rite of Committal is a tender moment of farewell, including Scripture, the Prayers of Commendation, the Lord's Prayer and a final blessing.

Lay ministers may also assist during the Funeral Mass, which is always presided over by a priest.



## The Funeral Mass

The Funeral Mass follows a sacred and time-honoured structure. After the opening hymn and words of welcome, you are warmly invited to bring forward a few simple symbols (usually four or five) that speak of the life and faith of your loved one. These may include a family photograph or other meaningful items. A short explanation may be offered by a family member or by the celebrant.

Words of Appreciation and Thanks, a brief sharing (ideally no longer than 5–6 minutes) that honours the life of the person, can be included at the beginning or end of the Mass. A member of the Funeral Ministry Team will be happy to support you in preparing this reflection so that it remains gentle, fitting and prayerful in the sacred space of the church.

## Readings for the Liturgy of the Word

You are invited to choose:

- One Reading from the Old Testament
- One Psalm
- One Reading from the New Testament
- Prayers of the Faithful (4 to 6 intercessions, which may be personalised). These may be shared among family members or friends who would like to participate.



The Liturgy of the Word is followed by the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

## Other Options

- A Prayer Service without the celebration of Mass in the church or funeral home

*We invite you to discuss these options with the celebrant, the Funeral Director or a member of the Funeral Ministry Team.*

## Healing Through Music

Sacred music and hymns have a special power to console the grieving heart and draw us closer to the presence of God. You may wish to choose hymns that were special for your loved one or that carry deep meaning for your family. The words of these hymns often bring comfort and healing to those who mourn. Because the Funeral Mass is a sacred liturgy, we kindly ask that sacred music is used. A suggested list of hymns can be found at the back of this booklet.



## OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

### [1] A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain, the Lord Sabaoth is preparing for all peoples a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines, of succulent food, of well-strained wines. On this mountain, he has destroyed the veil which veiled all peoples, the pall enveloping all nations. He has destroyed death for ever. Lord God has wiped away the tears from every cheek; he has taken his people's shame away over all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. And on that day, it will be said, 'Look, this is our God, in him we put our hope that he would save us. This is the Lord; we waited for him. Let us exult and rejoice in his salvation'.

**The Word of the Lord.**

### [2] A Reading from the Book of Wisdom 3:1-9

But the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and no torment can touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, their departure was reckoned a disaster, their leaving an annihilation; but they are at peace, and if in human eyes they were being punished, their hope was rich with immortality; slight was their correction, great will their blessings be, for God was putting them to the test and has found them worthy of himself; like gold in a furnace he was testing them, and as a sacrificial burnt offering has accepted them. At their time of judgement, they will shine out; as sparks run through the stubble. They will judge nations, rule over peoples, and the Lord will be their king for ever. Those who trust in him will understand the truth, the faithful will wait for him in love; for grace and mercy await his chosen ones.

**The Word of the Lord.**

### [3] A Reading from the Book of Wisdom 4:7-15

The upright, even dying before due time, will find rest. The honour of old age comes not from length of days, is not measured by number of years; understanding - this is grey hairs, a blameless life - this is ripe old age. Found pleasing to God, such a one has been loved; living among sinners, such a one is set free, snatched away lest evil stain such understanding or guile seduce the soul; for the lure of evil takes the shine off the good and

the tricks of desire corrupt an innocent heart. Perfection soon won brought the soul of long years; such a soul was pleasing to the Lord and was plucked from the midst of evil, while those who look on cannot understand, cannot get into their heads. There is grace and mercy for his chosen ones and care for his holy ones.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**[4] A Reading from the Book of Lamentations 3:17-26**

I have been deprived of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is. I thought, 'Gone is my hope and my endurance in the Lord'. Bring to mind my misery and anguish; it is wormwood and gall! My heart dwells on this continually and sinks within me. This is what I shall keep in mind and so regain some hope: The Lord's mercies are not over, his deeds of faithful love not exhausted; every morning they are renewed; great is your faithfulness! 'The Lord is all I have,' says my soul and so I put my hope in him. The Lord is good to those who trust him, to all who search for him. It is good to wait in silence for the Lord's salvation.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**[5] A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus 38:16–18,23**

My child, shed tears over the dead; lament for the dead to show your sorrow, then prepare the body with due ceremony and do not neglect the grave. Weep bitterly, beat your breast, observe the mourning the dead deserves for one day or two, to avoid criticism, and then be comforted in your sorrow; for grief can lead to death, a grief-stricken heart cripples the strength. In the rest of the dead, let their memory rest; be comforted for the dead once the spirit has departed.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**[6] A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah 41:10, 44:22, 49:15-16**

Do not be afraid, for I am with you; do not be alarmed, for I am your God. I give you strength, truly I help you, truly I hold you firm with my saving right hand. I have dispelled your rebellions like a cloud, your sins like a mist. Come back to me, for I have redeemed

you. Can a woman forget the baby at her breast, feel no love for the child of her womb? Even if these were to forget, I shall not forget you. Look, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands, your ramparts are ever before me.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**[7] A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven: a time to give birth, a time to die; a time to plant and a time to uproot what has been planted; a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to knock down and a time to build up; a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; a time to throw stones away and a time to gather them in; a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to discard; a time to tear and a time to sew; a time to keep silent and a time to speak; a time to love and a time to hate; a time for war and a time for peace.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**[8] A Reading from the Book of Job 19:23-27**

Will no one let my words be recorded, inscribed on some monument with iron chisel and with lead, cut into the rock for ever? I know that I have a living Redeemer and that he will rise up at the last, on the dust of the earth. After my skin has thus been stripped from me, from my flesh I shall look on God. He whom I shall see will take my part: my eyes will be gazing on no stranger.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**[9] A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah 61:1-3**

The spirit of Lord God is on me for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the afflicted, to soothe the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, release to those in prison, to proclaim a year of the Lord's favour, a day of vindication for our God, to comfort those who mourn, to give to those who mourn for Zion a headdress in place of

ashes, a garland in place of mourning-dress, the oil of gladness in place of a drooping spirit; and they will be called 'oak trees of saving justice', planted by the Lord for his glory.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**[10] A Reading from the Book of Tobit 4:1-5**

The same day Tobit remembered the silver he had left with Gabael at Rhages in Media and thought, 'Here I am, at the point of praying for death; why don't I call my son Tobias and explain to him about this silver before I die?' He summoned his son Tobias and when he came told him, 'When I die, give me a fine burial. Honour your mother, and never abandon her all the days of your life. Do all that she wants and give her no reason for sorrow. Remember, my child, all the risks she ran for your sake when you were in her womb. And when she dies, bury her at my side in the same grave.'

**The Word of the Lord.**



## RESPONSORIAL PSALMS

### 1] Psalm 23

**Response:** *The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.*

The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.  
Fresh and green are the pastures  
where he gives me repose.  
Near restful waters he leads me;  
he revives my soul.

**Response:**

He guides me along the right path,  
for the sake of his name.  
though I should walk in the valley of the shadow of death,  
no evil would I fear, for you are with me.  
Your crook and your staff will give me comfort.

**Response:**

You have prepared a table for me  
in the sight of my foes.  
My head you have anointed with oil;  
My cup is overflowing.

**Response:**

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life.  
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell  
for the length of days unending.

**Response:**



### 2] Psalm 25

**Response:** *To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.*

In you, O my God, have I trusted;  
let me not be put to shame;  
let not my enemies exult over me.  
let none who hope in you be put to shame;  
but shamed are those who want only to break faith.

**Response:**

O Lord make me know your ways.  
Teach your paths.  
Guide me in your truth, and teach me;

for you are the God of my salvation  
In you I hope all day long.

**Response:**

Remember your compassion, O Lord,  
and your acts of merciful love,  
for they are of old.

**Response:**

Do not remember the sins of my youth,  
nor my offences.

In your merciful love remember me,  
because of your goodness, O Lord.

**Response:**

### **3] Psalm 130**

**Response: *Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.***

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;  
Lord, hear my voice!

O let your ears be attentive  
to the sound of my pleading.

**Response:**

If you, O Lord shall mark our faults,  
Lord, who could stand?

But with you is found forgiveness,  
that you may be revered.

**Response:**

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,  
I hope in his word.

My soul is intent on the Lord  
more than watchman for daybreak.

**Response:**

More than watchman for daybreak,  
let Israel wait for the Lord.

For with the Lord there is merciful love,  
in him is plentiful redemption.

It is he who will redeem Israel  
from all its iniquities.

**Response:**

#### 4] Psalm 122

**Response:** *I rejoiced when they said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord.*

I rejoiced when they said to me,  
'Let us go to the house of the Lord,'  
And now our feet are standing  
within your gates, O Jerusalem.

**Response:**

Jerusalem is built as a city  
bonded as one together.  
It is there that the tribes go up,  
The tribes of the Lord.

**Response:**

For Israel's witness it is  
to praise the name of the Lord.  
There were set the thrones of judgement,  
the thrones of the house of David.

**Response:**

For the peace of Jerusalem pray,  
'May they prosper, those who love you.'  
May peace abide in your walls,  
And security be in your towers.

**Response:**



#### 5] Psalm 131

**Response:** *My soul is longing for your peace.*

O Lord, my heart is not proud  
Nor haughty my eyes.  
I have not gone after things too great,  
nor marvels beyond me.

**Response:**

Truly, I have set my soul  
in silence and tranquillity.  
As a baby full fed on its mother,  
as a baby full fed in my soul within me.  
O Israel, wait for the Lord,  
both now and forever.

**Response:**

## 6] Psalm 26

**Response:** *For your faithful love is before my eyes, and I live my life by your truth.*

Give judgement for me, O Lord,  
for I have walked in my integrity.  
I have trusted in the Lord, I have not wavered.

**Response:**

Examine me, Lord, and try me.  
O test my heart and my mind.  
Your mercy is before my eyes,  
And I walk according to your truth.

**Response:**

I wash my hands in innocence  
and take my place around your altar,  
singing a song of thanksgiving,  
recounting all your wonders.  
O Lord, I love the house where you dwell  
The place where your glory abides.

**Response:**

## 7] Psalm 119

**Response:** *Happy the one who finds pleasure in the law of the Lord.*

Blessed are those whose way is blameless,  
who walk in the law of the Lord!  
Blessed are those who keep his decrees!  
With all their hearts they seek him.  
They never do anything evil;  
but walk in his ways.  
You have laid down your precepts  
to be carefully kept.

**Response:**

May my ways be firm  
in keeping your statutes.  
Then I shall not be put to shame  
as I observe all your commands.  
I will thank you with an upright heart,  
as I learn your righteous judgements.  
I will keep your statutes  
do not ever forsake me.

**Response:**

## NEW TESTAMENT READINGS

### **[1] A Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans 5:5-11**

Hope does not disappoint, since the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us. When we were still helpless, at the due time, Christ died for the godless. Scarcely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person perhaps someone might undertake to die. So God proves his love for us, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. How much more can we be sure, therefore, now that we have been justified by his death, we shall be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more can we be sure that, being now reconciled, we shall be saved by his life! What is more, we even exult in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have already received our reconciliation.

**The Word of the Lord.**

### **[2] A Reading from the Book of Revelation 14:13-15**

Then I heard a voice from heaven say to me, 'Write down: Blessed are those who from now on die in the Lord! Indeed, says the Spirit, now they can have rest from their work, since their good deeds follow them'. Then I looked, and saw a white cloud and seated upon it, one like a son of man with a gold crown on his head and a sharp sickle in his hand. Then another angel came out of the sanctuary and cried out in a loud voice to the one seated upon the cloud, 'Put in your sickle and reap, for the harvest time has come and the harvest of the earth is ripe.'

**The Word of the Lord.**

### **[3] A Reading from the First Letter of St John 3:1-3**

See what great love the Father has lavished on us by letting us be called God's children and that is what we are! The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. My dear friends, we are already God's children, but what we shall be, has not yet been

revealed. We know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Whoever treasures this hope of him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

**The Word of the Lord.**

#### **[4] A Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians 5:1-6**

About times and seasons, brothers and sisters, there is no need to write to you for you know very well that the Day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night. When people are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction falls on them, as suddenly as labour pains come on a pregnant woman; and there is no escape. But you, brothers and sisters are not in the dark, that the day should surprise you like a thief. No, you are all children of light and children of the day: we do not belong to the night or to darkness, so let us not fall asleep, as everyone else does, but stay awake and sober.

**The Word of the Lord.**

#### **[5] A Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans 8:31-39**

What more shall we say? If God is for us, who can be against us? Since he did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for the sake of all of us, will he not with him give us everything else? Who can bring a charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies, who can condemn? Jesus Christ who died, or rather was raised up, who is also at the right hand of God and who intercedes for us? Can anything separate us from the love of Christ - can hardship or distress, or persecution, or lack of food or clothing, or danger or the sword? As it is written: *For your sake we are being put to death all day long, reckoned as sheep to be slaughtered?* No, through him who loved us we are more than conquerors in all those things. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nothing already in existence and nothing still to come, nor any power, nor height nor depths, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**The Word of the Lord.**

### **[6] A Reading from the First letter of St John 4:7-12**

My dear friends, let us love one another, since love is from God and everyone who loves is a child of God and knows God. No one who fails to love knows God, because God is love. In this, the love of God was revealed among us, that God sent his only Son into the world that we might have life through him. Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. My dear friends, if God loved us so much, we too should love one another. No one has ever seen God, if we love one another, God abides in us and his love comes to perfection in us.

**The Word of the Lord.**

### **[7] A Reading from the Second Letter of St Paul to Timothy 4:5-8**

But you must remain sober in everything; put up with suffering; do the work of proclaiming the gospel, fulfil the service asked of you. As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time has come for me to depart. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith; all there is to come for me now is the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me on that Day; and not only to me but also to all those who have longed for his appearing.

**The Word of the Lord.**

### **[8] A Reading from the Letter to the Ephesians 3:14-19**

This, then, is why I bend knee to the Father, from whom every fatherhood, in heaven or on earth, takes its name. According to the wealth of his glory, may you be strengthened in power through the Spirit with regard to your inner being, so that through faith Christ may live in your hearts, as you are planted and founded in love, so that with all the saints you may have the strength to grasp the breadth and the length, the height and the depth; and to know the love of Christ, which transcends all knowledge, so that you may be filled with the whole fullness of God.

**The Word of the Lord.**

### **[9] A Reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Romans 14:7:12**

For none of us lives for ourselves and none of us dies for ourselves; for if we are alive, we are alive for the Lord and if we die, we die for the Lord; and so, alive or dead, we belong to the Lord. It was for this that Christ died and came to life again: so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why, then, do you judge your brother or sister, and why do you despise your brother or sister? We will all stand before the judgement-seat of God, as it is written: *As I live*, says the Lord, *every knee shall bow before me, every tongue shall give glory to God*. Each of us will give an account of ourselves.

**The Word of the Lord.**

### **[10] A Reading from the Second Letter of St Paul to the Philippians 3:8-14**

Yes, I will go further: because of the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, I count everything else as loss. For him I have accepted the loss of all other things, and look on them all as filth if only I can gain Christ and be found in him having not my own righteousness from the law but righteousness from God, through faith in Christ, based on faith, that I may come to know him and the power of his resurrection, and partake of his sufferings by being moulded to the pattern of his death, if somehow I may reach the goal of resurrection from the dead. Not that I have secured it already, nor yet reached my goal, but I am still pursuing it, in the attempt to take hold of the prize for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not reckon myself as having taken hold of it; but one thing is that forgetting all that lies behind me, and straining forward to what lies ahead, I am racing towards the finishing-point to win the prize of God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus.

**The Word of the Lord.**

### **[11] A Reading from the First Letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians 4:13-18**

We want you to be quite certain, brothers and sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, to make sure that you do not grieve, as others do who have no hope. If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, in the same way God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. We can tell you this from the Lord's word, that we, the living who are left behind for the Lord's coming, will not at all precede those who have fallen asleep. At the

word of command, at the voice of the Archangel and the trumpet of God, the Lord himself will come down from heaven; those who have died in Christ will be the first to rise. Then we, the living who are left behind, will be snatched up in the clouds, together with them, to meet the Lord in the air, and we shall be with the Lord for ever. Therefore, encourage one another with such thoughts as these.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**[12] A Reading from the Book of Revelation 21:1-4**

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying 'Look, here God lives among human beings. He will make his home among them; they will be his people, and God himself will be with them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; death will be no more and sadness and crying and pain will be no more. The first things have passed away.'

**The Word of the Lord.**

**[13] A Reading from the Book of Revelation 22:12-14**

Look, I am coming soon, and my reward is with me, to repay each one according to the deeds of each. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. Blessed are those who wash their robes clean, so that they will have a right to the tree of life and can come through the gates into the city.

**The Word of the Lord.**



## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Choose four or six of the following. If you wish, compose some of your own or adapt some of these.

1. Let us pray for N. In baptism he/she died with Christ, may he/she now share in the fullness of his resurrection. Lord, hear us.
2. God is full of mercy and compassion. May he forgive N. any sins he/she committed through human frailty. Lord, hear us.
3. For the sorrowing family, relatives, and friends of N., that you may find strength and consolation in your Christian faith and in the love and support of this community. Lord, hear us.
4. We pray for those who mourn N's death that you may find strength and consolation in the hope we have through the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Lord, hear us.
5. God of all consolation, help us to comfort one another in our grief, finding light in time of darkness, and faith in time of doubt. Lord, hear us.
6. We pray for all those we have loved and have died. Lord give them the reward of their goodness. Lord, hear us.
7. We pray for those who care for the sick and dying, especially those who cared for N. during his/her illness. Lord, hear us.
8. For all parents who grieve over the death of their children; that they may be comforted in the knowledge that they rest in God. Lord, hear us.
9. May the prayers of Mary, the Mother of God, who stood by the cross as her son was dying, help those who mourn and be with all of us in our time of need. Lord, hear us.
10. We pray for those here today that our memory of N. whom we loved may inspire us with a renewed love for all our sisters and brothers. Lord, hear us.
11. We pray for all of us here today and for all members of our Church; that we may be prepared for the hour of our death, when God will call us by name, to pass from this world to the next. Lord, hear us.



## COMMUNION REFLECTIONS:

*If it would be helpful, you may choose one of the Reflections offered below. Should you prefer to use a personal piece that is not included here, please speak with the priest or Lay Minister beforehand, so we may discern it together. This Reflection is traditionally offered after the reception of the Eucharist. It may be read by a family member or a dear friend, in a spirit of quiet reverence and love.*

### **JOURNEY OF LIFE** - *Adapted from an old Hebrew prayer.*

For each of us life is like a journey.  
Birth is the beginning of this journey,  
And death is not the end but the destination.  
It is a journey that takes us from youth to age,  
from innocence to awareness,  
from ignorance to knowledge,  
from foolishness to wisdom,  
from weakness to strength and often back again,  
from offence to forgiveness,  
from loneliness to friendship,  
from pain to compassion,  
from fear to faith,  
from defeat to victory and from victory to defeat,  
until, looking backward or ahead, we see  
that victory does not lie at some high point along the way,  
but in having made the journey, stage by stage.

### **REFLECTION GRIEF** by *John O'Donohue*

Though the silent weeping of your heart lessens, you get on, more or less, with your life; a place is kept within you for the one who is gone. No other will ever be given the key to that door. As the years go on you may not remember the departed every day with your conscious mind. Yet below your surface mind, some part of you is always in their presence.

From their side, our friends in the unseen world are always secretly embracing us in their new and bright belongings. Though we may forget them, they can never forget us; their secret embrace unknowingly shelters and minds us.

The bright moment in grief is when the sore absence gradually changes into a well of presence. You become aware of the subtle companionship of the departed one. You know that when you are in trouble, you can turn to this presence beside you and draw on it for encouragement and blessing.

### **On the Death of the Beloved** by *John O Donohue*

Though we need to weep your loss,  
you dwell in that safe place in our hearts,  
Where no storm or night or pain can reach you.  
Your love was like the dawn, brightening over our lives.  
Awakening beneath the dark. A further adventure of colour.  
The sound of your voice found for us a new music that brightened everything.  
Whatever you enfolded in your gaze quickened in the joy of its being; You placed  
smiles like flowers on the altar of the heart.  
Your mind always sparkled with wonder at things.  
Though your days here were brief, your spirit was alive, awake, complete.  
We look towards each other no longer, from the old distance of our names.  
Now you dwell inside the rhythm of breath, as close to us as we are to ourselves.  
Though we cannot see you with outward eyes, we know our  
soul's gaze is upon your face.  
Smiling back at us from within everything to which we bring our best refinement.  
Let us not look for you only in memory, where we would grow lonely without you.  
You would want us to find you in presence, beside us when beauty brightens,  
When kindness glows and music echoes eternal tones.

### **On the Death of the Beloved** [*Shorter version*] by *John O Donohue*

Though we need to weep your loss, you now dwell in that safe place in our hearts where no storm or night or pain can reach you. Though your days here were brief, your spirit was alive, awake, complete. Let us not look for you only in memory, where we would feel lonely without you. You would want us to find you in presence. May you continue to inspire us: to enter each day with a generous heart. To serve the call of courage and love until we see your face once again in that land where there is no more separation, where all tears will be wiped from our mind, and where we will never lose you again.

### **Love Lives On** - *Author unknown*

Those we love remain with us  
for love itself lives on,  
and cherished memories never fade  
because a loved one's gone.  
Those we love can never  
be more than a thought apart,  
for as long as there is memory,  
they'll live on in the heart.



**“Reflection”** - *Author unknown*

Whatever your cross, whatever your pain, there will always be sunshine after the rain. Perhaps you may stumble, perhaps even fall, but God's always ready, to answer your call. He knows every heartache, he sees every tear, a word from His lips, can calm every fear. Your sorrows may linger throughout the night, but suddenly vanish in dawn's early light. The Saviour is waiting, somewhere above, to give you his grace, and send you his love. Whatever your cross, whatever your pain, God always sends rainbows, after the rain!

**All is Well** by *Henry Scott Holland*

Death is nothing at all; I have only slipped away into the next room. I am I, and you are you; whatever we were to each other, that we are still. Call me by my old familiar name, speak to me in the easy way which you always used. Put no difference into your tone; wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow. Laugh as we always laughed at the little jokes we enjoyed together. Play, smile, think of me, pray for me. Let my name be ever the household word it was. Let it be spoken without effect, without the ghost of a shadow on it. Life means all that it ever meant. It is the same as it ever was; there is absolutely unbroken continuity. What is this death but a negligible accident; why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight? I am but waiting for you, for an interval, somewhere very near, just around the corner. All is well.

**Death Is Only a Horizon** by *Bede Jarett, O.P.*

We give them back to you, O Lord, who first gave them to us; and as you did not lose them in the giving so we do not lose them in the return. Not as the world gives do you give O Lord. For what is yours is ours also if we belong to you. Life is unending because love is undying and the boundaries of this life are but a horizon and a horizon is but the limit of our vision. Lift us up, strong Son of God, that we may see further. Strengthen our faith that we may see beyond the horizon. And while you prepare a place for us as you have promised, prepare us also for that happy place; that where you are we may be also, with those we have loved, forever.

**Peace At Last** by *St. John Henry Cardinal Newman*

May the Lord support us all the day long; till the shades lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then in his mercy, may he give us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at last. Amen.

## Hymns for Funeral Services

This list is not exhaustive. Your Funeral Director can advise you on musicians /soloists/ choirs etc. available in your area. Please note If you wish to include hymns other than those here, discuss this with the organiser.

- **Abide with Me** (Traditional, comforting)
- **Ag Críost an Síol** (Irish, suitable for communion/offertory)
- **Amazing Grace** (Traditional, themes of salvation)
- **As I Kneel Before You** (Marian hymn)
- **A Time to Remember** (Liam Lawton)
- **Be Not Afraid** (Comforting hymn based on Scripture)
- **Christ Be Beside Me** (Opening hymn)
- **Here I Am, Lord** (Contemporary, call)
- **How Great Thou Art** (Popular, majestic)
- **It Is Well with My Soul** (Comfort)
- **Jesus Remember Me** (Taizé chant)
- **Lady of Knock** (Marian)
- **Morning Has Broken** (Hymn of life)
- **Nearer, My God, to Thee** (Traditional)
- **On Eagles Wings** (Psalm 91, popular)
- **Soul of My Saviour** (Communion)
- **The Cloud's Veil** (Lawton, popular modern)
- **The Lord Is My Shepherd** (psalm 23)
- **The Old Rugged Cross** (Traditional)
- **The Lord shall heal the broken heart** (Lawton, Communion or recessional)
- **When Creation was Begun** (Marian)
- **You Raise Me Up** (Modern reflection)



## **Funeral Service when a Mass is not Celebrated**

*Here is a sample service that can be adapted using different prayers, readings, reflections and music.*

*ALL STAND*

### **Opening Hymn**

### **Welcome and Introduction**

**Leader:** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** The Lord be with you.

**All:** And with your spirit.

### **Opening Prayer**

**Leader:** Let us pray, God of mercy, Look kindly on your servant \_\_\_\_\_ who has set down the burden of his/her years. As he served you faithfully throughout his life, may you give him/her the fullness of your peace and joy. We give thanks for \_\_\_\_\_'s life, now caught up in your eternal love. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus who is our risen Lord now and forever.

**All:** Amen.

*ALL SIT*

### **Reading – Please select from booklet**

### **Responsorial Psalm - Can be sung or spoken – see booklet**

*ALL STAND*

### **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia or Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ! Glory, praise and honour to you.

### **Gospel**

*ALL SIT*

### **Homily/Reflection**

### **Reflection - Bede the Venerable**

Christ is the morning star who, when the night of this world is past, brings to his saints the promise of the light of life and opens everlasting day.

### **Hymn**

*ALL STAND*

**Intercessions - – Please select from booklet or from here.**

**Leader:** God, the almighty Father, raised Jesus his Son from the dead; with confidence we ask him to save all his people, living and dead: For \_\_\_\_\_, who in baptism was given the pledge of eternal life, that he/she now be admitted to the company of the saints. Lord in your mercy:

**All: Hear our Prayer**

**Reader:** For the family and friends of \_\_\_\_\_, that they may be consoled in their grief by Jesus who wept at the death of his friend Lazarus. Lord in your mercy:

**All: Hear our Prayer**

**Reader:** For those who cared for \_\_\_\_\_ in his/her final illness, that they will be blessed in return for their tender care. Lord in your mercy:

**All: Hear our Prayer**

**Reader:** For our deceased relatives and friends and for all who have helped us, that they may have the reward of their goodness. Lord in your mercy:

**All: Hear our Prayer**

**Reader:** For all gathered here to worship in faith, that we may meet together again in God's kingdom. Lord in your mercy:

**All: Hear our Prayer**

**Leader:** God our shelter and our strength, You listen in love to the cry of your people: Hear the prayers we offer for our departed brothers and sisters. Cleanse them from their sins and grant them the fullness of redemption. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

**Final Commendation and Farewell**

**Invitation to Prayer**

Before we go our separate ways, let us take leave of our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_. May our farewell express our affection for him/her; may it ease our sadness and strengthen our hope. One day we shall joyfully greet \_\_\_\_\_ again when the love of Christ, which conquers all things, destroys even death itself.

**Song of Farewell**

**Leader:** Saints of God, come to \_\_\_\_\_'s aid! Hasten to meet him/her, angels of the Lord!

**Response: Receive \_\_\_\_\_'s soul and present him/her to God the Most High.**

**Leader:** May Christ, who called you, take you to himself; may angels lead you to the bosom of Abraham.

**Response: Receive \_\_\_\_\_'s soul and present him/her to God the Most High.**

**Leader:** Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him/her.

**Response:** Receive \_\_\_\_\_'s soul and present him/her to God the Most High.

### **Prayer of Commendation**

**Leader:** Into your hands, Father of mercies, we commend our brother/sister, \_\_\_\_\_, in the sure and certain hope, that together with all who have died in Christ, he/she will rise again with Him. We give you thanks for the blessings which you bestowed upon \_\_\_\_\_ in this life: they are signs to us of your goodness and of our fellowship with the saints in Christ.

Merciful Lord, turn toward us and listen to our prayers: open the gates of paradise to your servant and help us who remain to comfort one another with assurances of faith, until we all meet in Christ and are with you and with our brother/sister forever.

**Response: Amen.**

In peace let us bring \_\_\_\_\_ to his/her place of rest. May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs come to welcome you and take you to the holy city, the new and eternal Jerusalem.

**All: Amen**

### **Hymn**



## Preparing for a Funeral

Name of deceased: .....

Address: .....

### Notes on the life of the deceased for funeral homily

Name he/ she was known by: .....

Name of spouse: .....

Names of children: .....

.....

Names of sisters and brothers: .....

.....

Names of parents: .....

Age: .....

Hobbies: .....

.....

.....

.....

Work:.....

.....

Personality: .....

.....

.....

History of illness: .....

.....

.....

**FUNERAL MASS**

**Opening Hymn:** .....

**Symbols of Life:** .....

**Introduced by:** .....

**Family Participants:** .....

**Words of Appreciation and Thanks:** .....

*- Please clarify with the celebrant*

**Liturgy of the Word**

**First Reading read by:** .....

**Responsorial Psalm, read or sung by:** .....

**Second Reading read by:** .....

**Gospel and Homily (Celebrant):** .....

**Prayers of the Faithful read by:** .....

**Liturgy of The Eucharist**

**Offertory Procession of the Bread & Wine, being brought to the Altar by:**

**Preparation of the Gifts: - Option of a hymn or instrumental music**

.....

**Preface & Eucharistic Prayer- Celebrant**

**Communion Rite**

**Our Father**

**Communion Hymns:** .....

**Post Communion Reflection: Yes / No**

**If yes, being read by:** .....

**Concluding Rites, Final prayer and Blessing and Final Commendation- Priest**

**Recessional Hymn** .....

**Name of Contact Person (Next of Kin):** .....

**Address:**.....  
.....

**Phone No:**.....

**Email:** .....

I/We are aware of Data Privacy Notice P015-1 with regard to funerals

Yes

I /We consent to be contacted by phone, post or email with regard to funeral, anniversary & remembrance Mass

Yes  No

**Signature:**..... **Date:**.....

**P015-1 Data Privacy Notice – Funerals & Annual November Mass for Deceased Parishioners**

*Being very mindful of your recent bereavement and how difficult a time this is for you and your family, we in the parish hesitate to add to the many things you have to deal with including formalities and other matters.*

*The parish takes your privacy very seriously and will only use your personal information for the reason it was provided. In this instance we need your name and contact information which has been given by you or by the funeral director who has shared it with your consent. It may be used by the priests and parish staff to facilitate the funeral of your loved one.*

*We will keep your information on file in a secure filing cabinet so we can invite you to our next Annual November Mass for deceased parishioners, when your loved one will be remembered and prayed for by the parish community. This file can only be accessed by authorised parish staff. Your information will only be retained for the purpose for which it was collected and then will be securely disposed of. We will not share your information with any other person or organisation without your consent. If you wish to have your information deleted at any stage, please contact the Parish Office.*