



DIOCESE OF

LAKE CHARLES

Important
Information
Regarding
Cremation
and
Words of
Remembrance

*A
GUIDANCE
FOR CATHOLIC
FUNERALS*

Dearly Beloved who mourn,

The Catholic community joins me in offering our prayers, sympathy and support on the occasion of your loss. Losing someone dear to us is a cause of great sorrow. In the midst of this trial, however, our Lord makes known what it is that He offers us. There is no loss without purpose in God's plan.

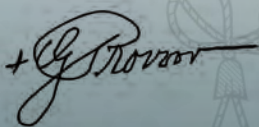
That purpose is revealed to us in Sacred Scripture, particularly in the Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. "Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted" (Matthew 5:4). For the Christian, there can be no mourning without comfort, a comfort coming from faith in the Redeemer who conquered death and hope in God for whom all are alive (Matthew 22:32).

This purpose is also revealed in the Church that stands beside you to support and console you.

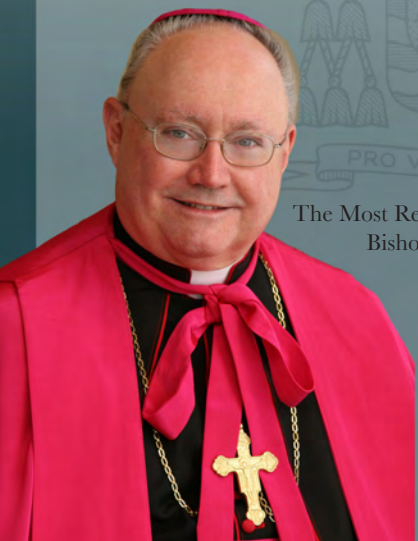
Please know that the clergy and staff of your parish church are there to offer what comfort and service they can to assist you in this time of need. Along with dedicated funeral home professionals, we in the Church are all here to help.

May our Lord increase your faith and bring you consolation, as I remain

In our Lord Jesus Christ,



+G. Provost



The Most Reverend Glen John Provost
Bishop of Lake Charles

P. Sullivan
10/10/07

When planning for funerals, two issues frequently arise for Catholics: that of cremation and eulogies. While Catholics may choose cremation, eulogies are not allowed at funeral liturgies in the Catholic Church. However, Words of Remembrance may be offered in memory of the deceased. The following information is provided to address any questions or concerns you may have regarding these two options.



May my loved one be cremated?

“Although cremation is now permitted by the Church, it does not enjoy the same value as the burial of the body.”

(Order of Christian Funerals, 413)

The *Order of Christian Funerals* offers the option of having a Vigil Service and a Funeral Liturgy with the body of the deceased present. Cremation would then occur at a later date, followed by the interment of the cremated remains.

It is also permitted to have the body cremated first, followed by the Vigil Service and the Funeral Liturgy, with the cremains present for both. The option in either case is yours.

In accord with the Catholic Church’s understanding of the mystery of life and death, and the dignity of the human person, body and spirit, “The cremated remains of a body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come. This includes the use of a worthy vessel to contain the ashes, the manner in which they are carried, the care and attention to appropriate placement and transport and the final disposition. The cremated remains should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium.

The practice of scattering the remains on the sea, from the air, or in the ground, or keeping cremated remains in the home of a relative or friend of the deceased are not the reverent disposition the Church requires.”

(cf. Order of Christian Funerals, 417)

If a family chooses to act in a manner other than the reverent disposition the Church requires, the diocesan bishop will decide whether the cremains will be present at the funeral liturgy.

Please contact your parish priest or deacon if you need further information or assistance.



Words of Remembrance **in the Catholic Funeral Rite**

Even though eulogies are not permitted in the funeral liturgy, the *Order of Christian Funerals* does permit Words of Remembrance.

Please note that this is an option; it is not a required element of the funeral liturgy. To assist you in making the decision whether or not to include this, we offer the following observations.

The Words of Remembrance are not the same as a Eulogy

Words of Remembrance focus solely on the faith life of the deceased, not on other anecdotal memories.

As Catholics, we say each day at Mass that “we wait in joyful hope” for the time of our return to the Lord. In reflecting on the faith life of the deceased, we prepare ourselves to say our farewell filled with the same joyful hope. “Because our loved one lived this life, we therefore with joyful hope entrust him/her to the Lord.” That is the spirit of Words of Remembrance. Reflecting on the manifestations of a loved one’s life of care and nurturing, of prayer and fidelity to the sacraments, of service to Christ’s Church family, of fidelity to relationship and commitments made in faith: these are all that need be included in Words of Remembrance, for this is how Christian faith is lived.

It is recommended that the Words of Remembrance be brief and offered by only one person on behalf of the family. The one chosen should understand the purpose of offering these words and the context in which they are given.

In our diocese, it is the preference of the bishop that Words of Remembrance, if included, are offered at:

- 1) the Vigil Service following the Concluding Prayer and before the Blessing and Dismissal.
- 2) If they are offered during the funeral liturgy during Mass, then they may be given following the Concluding Prayer and before the Final Commendation.
- 3) If during a funeral liturgy without Mass, then they may be offered after the Lord’s Prayer and before the Final Commendation.
- 4) They may also be offered at the conclusion of the Rite of Committal.

Your pastor will determine with you which preference will be followed.

A Mourner's Prayer

Lord Jesus, our Redeemer, you willingly gave yourself up to death, so that all might be saved and pass from death to life. We humbly ask you to comfort us in our grief and to receive (name) into the arms of your mercy. You alone are the Holy One, you are mercy itself; by dying you unlocked the gates of life for those who believe in you. Forgive (name) his/her sins, and grant him/her a place of happiness, light and peace in the kingdom of your glory forever and ever. **Amen.**



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www.lcdioocese.org

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Please contact the church parish of the deceased to arrange for funeral services. A complete listing of parish contact information can be found online at www.lcdioocese.org

Brochure courtesy of

MATTHEWS & SON FUNERAL HOME

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