

# Saint Francis of Assisi Roman Catholic Church

Allentown, Pennsylvania



# FUNERAL LITURGY PLANNING GUIDE

To Those Who Are Bereaved:

On behalf of our entire parish I wish to extend to you our heartfelt and deepest sympathies at the death of your loved one. This is a difficult and emotional time and I pray that you feel the prayers of our parish assisting you during these days. It is through the power of prayer that we gain our strength in trying times, and there is no more trying time than the time of death. It is our common prayer as a parish that Jesus, through the power of his resurrection, grant unto you peace and understanding.

This booklet is to assist you in the preparation of the funeral liturgy. The liturgy, by its very nature, is a celebration. A funeral liturgy is no different. It is a celebration of new life, the new life that we pray your loved one now shares in. This booklet will aid you in making your final good-bye truly the celebration of life for which it is. The funeral liturgy is also a time of hope. It is with fond hope that we pray for your loved one that God be merciful and grant unto them eternal life.

We stand with you at this time and we are ready to assist you. Please let us know how we can help you. And once again, on behalf of the parishioners of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish, I extend to you our prayers and sympathies.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

St. Francis of Assisi Pastoral Team

# Readings

In the Sacred Scriptures, God himself speaks to his people. It is because of this that the readings are held in great importance within the celebration of the Mass. As Jesus wept for his friend Lazarus, we too weep for the loved one who has passed from this earth. In the Funeral Mass, the readings help us understand and deal with the death of our loved one. We hear Christ's meaning on death proclaimed while they also nourish our faith that we will once again be with them in God's kingdom.

The Catholic Church given us a number of readings from which to choose that are appropriate for a Funeral Mass. We ask that you please look at the following selections and choose those words that you find most meaningful. You will choose a First Reading and a Second Reading. The cantor and organist will choose the Gospel Acclamation, which is sung before the Gospel is read. The celebrant of the Mass will choose the Gospel reading. If the deceased or the deceased's family members have a favorite scripture passage or Gospel reading, please let the parish funeral planner know so we can discuss it.



## **A. First Readings**

*Please choose one of the following.*

- I. **As sacrificial offerings he took them himself. –Wisdom 3:1-6, 9**

### **SHORT FORM**

A reading from the Book of Wisdom

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace. For if in the eyes of men, indeed, they be punished, yet their hope full of immortality; chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with his elect.

The word of the Lord.

**II. It is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the Lord. – Lamentations 3:17-26**

A reading from the Book of Lamentations

My soul is deprived of peace, I have forgotten what happiness is; I tell myself my future is lost, all that I hoped for from the Lord. The thought of my homeless poverty is wormwood and gall; remembering it over and over, leaves my soul downcast within me. But this I will call to mind, as my reason to have hope: The favors of the Lord are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent; They are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness. My portion is the Lord, says my soul; therefore I will hope in him. Good is the Lord to the one who waits for him, to the soul that seeks him; It is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

### III. **No One Can Determine the Right Time to Act – Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

A reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes

There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens.

A time to give birth, and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to uproot the plant.

A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to tear down, and a time to build.

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance.

A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather them; a time to embrace and a time to be far from embraces.

A time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to cast away.

A time to rend and a time to sew; a time to be silent and a time to speak.

A time to love and a time to hate; a time of war and a time of peace.

The word of the Lord.

*During the Easter Season, one of the following should be chosen for the first reading rather than from the above list.*

**IV. He is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. – Acts of the Apostles 10:34-43 or Acts of the Apostles 10:34-36, 42-43**

*(NOTE: There is a short and long version of this reading.)*

**LONG FORM**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter proceeded to speak, saying: “In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him. You know the word that he sent to the children of Israel as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the Devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible, not to all the people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is

the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

The word of the Lord.

## **SHORT FORM**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter proceeded to speak, saying: “In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him. You know the word that he sent to the children of Israel as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

The word of the Lord.

## **V. There shall be no more death. – Revelation 21:1-5a, 6b-7**

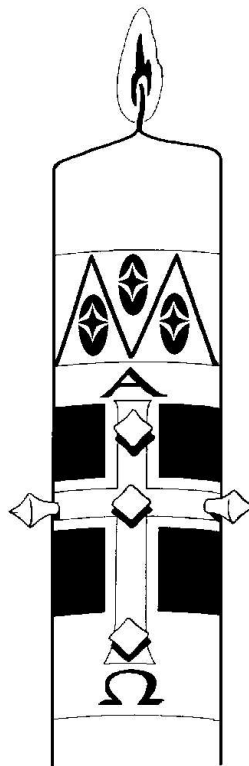
A reading from the Book of Revelation

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the



holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away." The one who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give a gift from the spring of life-giving water. The victor will inherit these gifts, and I shall be his God, and he will be my son."

The word of the Lord.



## **B. Second Readings**

### *Most Chosen Second Readings for Funeral Mass*

#### **I. We too might live in newness of life. – Romans 6:3-4, 8-9**

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

The word of the Lord.

#### **II. What will separate us from the love of Christ? – Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39**

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters: If God is for us, who can be against us? He did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, will he not also give

us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things, we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

### **III. Whether we love or die, we are the Lord's. – Romans 14:7-9, 10c-12**

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Brothers and sisters: No one lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why then do you judge your brother? Or you, why do you look down on your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written: *As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue*

*shall give praise to God.* So then each of us shall give an accounting of himself to God.

The word of the Lord.

**IV. What is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal. – 2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1**

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters: We know that the One who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence. Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God. Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal. For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

The word of the Lord.

**V. We have a building from God, eternal in heaven. – 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10**

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters: We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven. We are always courageous, although we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yet we are courageous, and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord. Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

The word of the Lord.

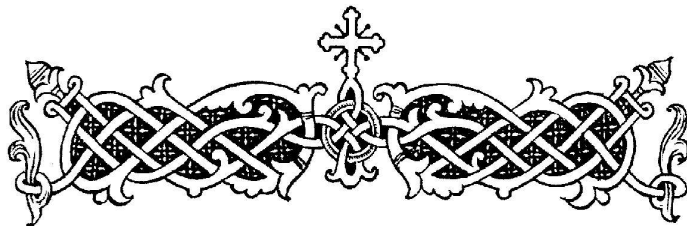
**VI. If we have died with him, we shall also live with him. – 2 Timothy 2:8-13**

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy

Beloved: Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David: such is my Gospel, for which I am suffering, even to the point of chains, like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen,

so that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory. This saying is trustworthy: *If we have died with him we shall live with him; if we persevere we shall also reign with him. But if we deny him he will deny us. If we are unfaithful he remains unfaithful, for he cannot deny himself.*

The word of the Lord.



# Hymns

Music holds a special place in any Mass. It is through music that we, as God's faithful, are able to transcend words, ultimately leading to more spiritual prayer. Hymns chosen at any Mass should be done with this in mind and should be sacred in nature. Secular (popular, non-church) music is not allowed in the Mass. The following hymns are appropriate for a Funeral Mass. Please choose a hymn for each piece of the Mass: Processional, Presentation (Offertory), Communion, and Recessional. As previously mentioned, the Gospel Acclamation will be chosen by the cantor and organist.

A Meditation piece is permitted, but not necessary to the Mass. It may be a hymn from the hymnal or something else appropriate, such as the *Ave Maria*. The meditations listed below are only suggestions, but others may be chosen as long as they are liturgically correct. If you choose to have a meditation hymn, please consult with the parish funeral planner.

Any last wishes of the deceased regarding any hymn not listed below should be discussed with the funeral planner, who will then make the decision whether it is to be used during the Mass after consultation with either the Organist and/or the celebrant. In addition, during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Lent, season specific hymns may be used during its respective time of year, but only within those seasons. Hymns that contain the word 'Alleluia' may not be used during Lent. These are designated with an asterisk\* behind it.



## **Processional & Recessional Hymns**

*Please choose one hymn for each.*

All Creatures of Our God & King\* – G 523  
Alleluia! Let the Holy Anthem Rise\* – G 440  
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus\* – G 826  
Alleluia! The Strife is O'er – G459  
Christ, Be Our Light – G512  
Be Not Afraid – G 596  
For All the Saints\* – G 791  
How Great Thou Art – G 496  
On Eagle's Wings – G 593  
Precious Lord, Take My Hand – G 847  
Sing With All the Saints in Glory – G 442  
Softly & Tenderly, Jesus is Calling – G 850  
We Are the Light of the World – G 515  
We Shall Rise Again – G 762

## **Presentation (Offertory) Hymn**

*Please choose one hymn.*

Alleluia! The Strife is O'er\* – G 459  
Amazing Grace – G 586  
Be Not Afraid – G 596  
Eye Has Not Seen – G 616  
Hail Mary: Gentle Woman – G 779  
I Have Loved You – G 504  
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say – G 622  
I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light – G 513  
Jerusalem, My Happy Home – G 764  
Keep In Mind – G 658  
The King of Love My Shepherd is – G 631  
Make Me A Channel of Your Peace – G 721



On Eagle's Wings – G 593  
Only in God – G 591  
Only This I Want – G 701  
Precious Lord, Take My Hand – G 847  
Remember Your Love – G 851  
Unless A Grain of Wheat - G 699  
We Remember – G 578  
Whatsoever You Do – G 656

## **Communion Hymn**

*Please choose one hymn.*

Behold the Lamb – G 824  
Eye Has Not Seen – G 616  
Hail Mary: Gentle Woman – G 779  
I Am the Bread of Life – G 822  
I Have Loved You – G 504  
Life-giving Bread, Saving Cup – G 821  
Make Me A Channel of Your Peace – G 721  
On Eagle's Wings – G 593  
One Bread, One Body – G 813  
Shepherd of Souls – G 818  
Taste & See – G 827  
Unless A Grain of Wheat - G 699  
We Remember – G 578  
Whatsoever You Do – G 656  
You Satisfy the Hungry Heart – G 816

## **Meditation Hymn Suggestions:**

Ave Maria – Franz Schubert  
Center of My Life – G 580  
Day is Done – G 751  
Go Silent, Friend – G 868  
Hail Mary: Gentle Woman – G 779  
Heart of Jesus, Hear  
I Have Loved You – G 504  
Jesus, Remember Me – G422  
The King of Love My Shepherd is – G 631  
Let There Be Peace on Earth – G 723  
Make Me A Channel of Your Peace – G 721  
Only in God – G 591  
Peace is Flowing Like a River – G 725



## **Eulogies and Final Remarks**

Eulogies are not permitted during the funeral liturgy as prescribed by the universal liturgical law of the Church. We ask that any eulogy, prepared by a family member or friend of the deceased, be given at another time than during Mass. It can be appropriate to offer eulogies at either the viewing (wake), at the cemetery, or at the funeral luncheon, if there is one.



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