

**THE CHURCH OF THE
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
FUNERAL PLANNING BOOKLET**



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Greetings,

When faced with the loss of a loved one, immediate planning of a funeral is a difficult and trying experience. Understandably, some families are reluctant to meet with the staff of their parish or their loved ones parish, who may be unfamiliar to them. For parish staff, especially the clergy, the death of a parishioner is a uniquely privileged and graced opportunity for the Church to initiate outreach to the family, to welcome and to minister to them, to evangelize, and, sometimes, to reconcile. Thus, those who mourn will find that the assistance of the dedicated clergy, staff and laypersons who serve in our parish is invaluable. Parish staff can help expedite the task of planning the funeral rites and make the process less burdensome. Furthermore, the members of our parish's pastoral team – priest, deacon, staff and laity – are especially called to be Christ's presence in such difficult times. By welcoming the ministry of the priest and those who serve in our funeral ministry and by providing them with a better understanding of the life of the deceased, families will help to adapt and personalize the funeral rites in a way that meaningfully conveys the Church's consolation and prayer.

Pre-planning allows one to make difficult decisions with the time and care required. Immaculate Conception Funeral Team has put this book together to aid you in your decision making. We hope to provide you with information that will guide you, as you look to the reality that, *one day God will bring each of us Himself*. To plan ahead for that day allows for reflective reading and prayerful consideration of the scriptures and songs chosen for the Funeral Liturgy. One's choices are meant to provide comfort and healing for those who mourn the loss of a loved one. Planning ahead may also allow one to more fully embrace the teachings of the Church and the sacredness of burying the dead. In most cases the planning and preparation tasks fall to the immediate survivors. However to share your desires with family and friends is leaving a gift of faith and hope; a gift that speaks about a deep faith and acceptance of eternal life which God has promised to all those who love the Lord.

Whether you choose to plan ahead or leave the planning to family or friends, this book was created to help in your decision making. If there is anything we can do to aid you in this process please call Pastoral Care at 763-788-9062 x212.

Catholic Funeral Rites

The Catholic Church holds up as normative the rites contained in its ritual book *The Order of Christian Funerals*. Normally Funeral rites include: a Vigil Service celebrated in the funeral home (often the night prior to the funeral) or in the church entrance (one hour before Mass) the Funeral Liturgy (in the church), and the Rite of Committal of the body (at the cemetery.)

We will provide for the needs of the family at the Vigil and Committal Service.

First Preference: Funeral rites with the Body present

The Catholic Church prefers that the body of the deceased be present for the Vigil Service. In addition, the body of the deceased should be brought to the local parish church for the Funeral Mass.

The Rite of Committal of the body normally takes place at the cemetery although the committal can be done at the end of the Funeral Mass. The body of the deceased is to be interred, either in the ground or in a crypt following the Funeral Mass.

Second Preference: Funeral rites with the body present and cremation afterwards

If the choice to cremate a body has been made, the Church recommends that the cremation take place after the Funeral Liturgy. In this case, the Vigil for the Deceased and related rites and prayers should be celebrated in the presence of the body. Then, the body should be brought to the parish church for the Funeral Liturgy with cremation taking place afterwards. After cremation of the body, the cremated remains should be committed for burial according to the *Order of Christian Funerals*. The cremated remains should be treated with the same respect given to the human body. Therefore, they should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium (but not common/communal columbarium). The practice of scattering of the cremated remains, keeping cremated remains in the home of a relative or friend, or placing parcel cremated remains in jewelry to be worn, are not the reverent disposition of the cremated remains that the Church requires.

Third Preference: Funeral rites with the cremated remains present.

The Catholic Church does allow the celebration of the Funeral Liturgy in the presence of the cremated remains of the deceased, but it is considered the least desirable choice. The Church strongly prefers that the body of the deceased be present for its funeral rites since the presence of the body clearly recalls the life and death of the person.

For several reasons someone may choose cremation first. When this happens, the Vigil for the deceased may be celebrated in the presence of the cremated remains. Likewise, the cremated remains may be brought to church for the celebration of the Funeral Mass and then buried properly.

Choosing a Funeral Home

It is best to decide upon a Funeral Home in advance. Most offer pre/planning services and are available to guide you through the many decisions that need to be made at this time. Services and fees may vary. Funeral directors are very helpful to the parish, they arrange for the times of the events, assist in setting up for the visitation, and help the family in coordinating the luncheon and the interment. They also provide assistance with programs, flowers, easels and tables for pictures, memory displays, and guest books. Normally the procedure is that, after news of death, the funeral home is contacted first. The funeral home will then contact us to determine possible times and dates for a funeral Mass. The family will meet with the funeral director and confirm the date/time. Family members should then contact Immaculate Conception Church to arrange for a meeting with our Priest who will preside at the funeral. Our Pastoral Care team will help to choose scripture readings, music, and other details of the funeral liturgy. If you have chosen to pre-plan we will still meet with the family to go over the choices that were made in advance.

Funeral Luncheon

The church will set up and clean up, provide servers, all dishes, cups, napkins and the like, we will also provide coffee and water for you and your guests. Food served at Immaculate Conception Church for Funeral Lunches is to be catered with the exception of home baked deserts. We provide a list of licensed caterers as a courtesy, but we do not make recommendations. Please feel free to use any licensed caterer you prefer. If the caterer has not worked with us in the past they will need to fax a Certificate of Insurance to our parish office. The family is responsible for contacting the caterer of their choice and making arrangements for the luncheon.

Funeral Liturgy: Music Selection

Music is an important component of the Liturgy. It often brings to the surface emotion and feelings that are not as easily confirmed through words alone. The words of the Funeral music reflect the love our Lord has for us and His triumph over death itself, which will hopefully bring comfort to those who mourn. Immaculate Conception Church has a Schola Choir available for all funerals, as well as several Cantors. Our Music Director accompanies on the piano. A list of music is provided below please choose five songs that hold a special place for you.

Funeral Liturgy: Music Selection
Immaculate Conception Church

Gathering/Recessional

645 Amazing Grace 683 Be Not Afraid
735 Blest Are They 777 Here I Am, Lord
578 How Great Thou Art 945 I Am the Bread of Life
527 I Know that My Redeemer Lives 510 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You
Just a Closer Walk with Thee - Choir 691 On Eagle's Wings
828 Make Me a Channel of Your Peace 955 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
525 The Strife is O'er 871 We Shall Rise Again

Responsorial Psalms

717 Shelter Me, O God – Psalm 16 30 You Will Show Me the Path – Psalm 16
35 Shepherd Me, O God – Psalm 23 39 To You, O Lord – Psalm 25
41 The Lord is My Light - Psalm 27 42 I Will Praise You Lord – Psalm 30
44 Let Your Mercy Be on Us – Psalm 33 55 My Soul is Thirsting – Psalm 63
65 Be With Me – Psalm 91 86 Blest Are Those Who Love You – 128
92 I Will Praise Your Name – Psalm 145

Offertory/Communion

683 Be Not Afraid 735 Blest Are They
728 Eye Has Not Seen 777 Here I Am, Lord
945 I Am the Bread of Life 714 In the Arms of God
593 I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light 663 Lord of all Hopefulness
701 No Greater Love 785 Now We Remain
828 Make Me a Channel of Your Peace 834 We Are Many Parts
681 We Remember 721 You Are Mine

Suggested Funeral Readings

The following are lists of Scriptures appropriate for use at Catholic Funeral Liturgies. One reading is chosen from each the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Gospels.

*Other Scripture passages can be presented to the presider for approval..

Old Testament

- 2 Maccabees 12:43-46 "...he made atonement for the dead..."
- Job 19: 1, 23-27 "...I know that my vindicator lives..."
- Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 "...A time to be born, a time to die..."
- Wisdom 3:1-9 "...The souls of the just are in the hand of God..."
- Wisdom 3:1-6,9 "...The souls of the just are in the hand of God..."
- Wisdom 4:7-14 "The Righteous One, though he die early, shall be at rest..."
- Sirach 2:1-11 "...in fire gold is tested....Compassionate is the Lord..."
- Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9 "...he will destroy death forever..."
- Isaiah 26:7-19 "...your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise..."
- Lamentations 3:17-26 "...My portion is the Lord, says my soul..."

New Testament

- Acts of the Apostles 10:34-43 "Everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins"
- Acts of the Apostles 10:34-36,42-43 "Everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins"
- Romans 5:1,5-11 "...We were reconciled to God through the death of his Son..."
- Romans 5:17-21 "...through one righteous act acquittal and life came to all..."
- Romans 6:3-9 "...if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall live with him..."
- Romans 6:3-4,8-9 "...if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall live with him..."
- Romans 8:1-11 "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ..."
- Romans 8:14-23 "Those who are led by the Spirit of God are Children of God"
- Romans 8:31-35,37-39 "If God is for us, who can be against us?"
- Romans 14:7-9,10-12 "This is why Christ died and came to life"
- 1 Corinthians 2:6-10 "Eye has not seen, and ear has not heard..."
- 1 Corinthians 15:12-20 "If there is no resurrection of the dead..."
- 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 "In Adam all die, so too if Christ shall all be brought to life."
- 1 Corinthians 15:51-57 "Death where is your victory?"
- 2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1 "The one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us..."
- 2 Corinthians 5:1,6-10 "We would rather leave the body and go home..."
- Philippians 3:7-14 "...I run toward the prize to which God calls me..."
- Philippians 3:20-21 "He will change our lowly body..."

- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 "If we believe that Jesus died and rose..."
- 2 Timothy 2:8-13 "Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead..."
- 2 Timothy 4:1-2,6-8 "I have competed well, I have finished the race..."
- 1 John 3:1-2 "Beloved, we are God's children now..."
- 1 John 3:14-16 "We know that we have passed from death to life..."
- Revelation 14:13 "...Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord..."
- Revelation 20:11-12:1 "...The sea gave up its dead; then Death and Hades..."
- Revelation 21:1-5a,6b-7 "...I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem..."

Gospel

- Matthew 5:1-12a "The Eight Beatitudes"
- Matthew 11:25-30 "come to me . . . and I will give you rest."
- Matthew 25:1-13 "Look. The bridegroom comes. Go out to meet him"
- Matthew 25:31-46 "Come, you whom my Father has blessed"
- Mark 15:33-39 "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
- Mark 15:33 ---16:6 "Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last"
- Luke 7:11-17 "Young man, I say to you, arise."
- Luke 12:35-40 "Be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect,..."
- Luke 23:33-43 "Today you will be with me in paradise."
- Luke 23:44 ---24:6a "Father, I put my life in your hands."
- Luke 23:44-49 "Father into your hands I commend my spirit"
- Luke 24:13-35 "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer..."
- Luke 24:13-16,28-35 "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer..."
- John 5:24-29 "Whoever hears my word and believes has passed from..."
- John 6:37-40 "All who believe in the Son will have eternal life..."
- John 6:51-58 "All who eat this bread will live for ever...."
- John 11:17-27 "I am the resurrection and the life."
- John 11:21-27 "I am the resurrection and the life."
- John 11:32-45 "Lazarus, come out."
- John 12:23-28 "If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies..."
- John 12:23-26 "If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies..."
- John 14:1-6 "There are many rooms in my Father's house."
- John 17:24-26 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me..."
- John 19:17-30 "Jesus bowed his head and gave up his spirits."

Ministry Options for family members during Funeral Mass

There are opportunities for family or friends to serve during the Mass. They need not be Catholic.

- Draping of the funeral pall (multiple family members)—The draping of the funeral pall is a ritual that begins the funeral Mass with a casket present. The pall symbolizes the clothes worn during baptism, and the joyful triumph over death brought about by the Resurrection. The ritual is meant to be a sacred and intimate time for family members to cover their loved one with a beautiful symbol of faith.
- Procession of the urn (1 person to carry the urn)—If the deceased person has been cremated and the remains have been placed in an urn, the urn may be carried to the front of the church and placed on a table that will be prepared in front of the altar.
- Lectors (two to three people)—Lectors proclaim the two Scripture readings chosen by the family and also the Prayers of the Faithful provided by the church during the Mass. The first reading is from the Old Testament and the second reading is from the New Testament. It is best to have adults proclaim the Scripture readings for this service and for them to become familiar with the readings before the Mass. The church will provide copies of the Scripture readings.
- Gift Bearers (three or more members)—Gift bearers process during Mass to the altar carrying the bread, wine and water used for Holy Communion. Young children who are able to securely carry the communion vessels are welcomed to participate.

All participants of Mass will be given direction by a member of the church the morning of the Funeral.

- Eulogy (1 or more people)—If the family of the deceased would like to have one or more people have the time to speak a Eulogy or Words of Remembrance about the deceased person, the policy of our parish is to have the Eulogy spoken in Fellowship Hall (lower level of the church) before or during Lunch but not in church during the Funeral Mass.

REMEMBERING IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH IN YOUR WILL AND ESTATE PLANNING

We greatly appreciate when people remember our Church or School in their Will and Estate Planning. Here are several ways you can remember our Church or School:

1) **Wills and Bequests.** In your Will, you can designate a specific amount, or a percentage of your Estate, to be given to our Church or School.

Sample wording for a Specific Amount (or Percentage of Estate) for an Unrestricted

Purpose: "I give, devise, and bequeath to the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church (or School), Columbia Heights, MN, the sum of \$ _____ (or ____ percent of the rest, residue and remainder of my Estate) as an unrestricted gift to be used at the discretion of the Pastor for the general needs of the Parish."

Sample Wording for a Specific Amount (or Percentage of Estate) for a Restricted Pur-

pose: "I give, devise, and bequeath to Immaculate Conception Catholic Church (or School), Columbia Heights, MN, the sum of \$ _____ (or ____ percent of the rest, residue and remainder of my Estate) to be used for the purpose of _____.
If changed circumstances make it impractical to use this gift for the purpose designated, then the gift may be used for a purpose that will adhere as closely as possible to my original intent."

2) **Life Insurance Policies.** Once children are grown, many people find they no longer have a need for their insurance policy. If this is the case, you can donate your policy to Immaculate Conception Church or School. In doing so, you may receive a tax deduction, reduce the size of your estate, and leave your current income undisturbed.

3) **Individual Retirement Account (IRA).** This is an easy planned gift to make. You can simply list Immaculate Conception Church or School as the beneficiary of your account. An IRA makes a great planned gift because you can donate it tax free.

4) **Appreciated Stocks or Assets** make a great charitable gift because they will retain their full value when given to our Church or School.

5) **Charitable Gift Annuity (CGA).** This allows you to make a charitable gift and provides you with an income stream at the same time. You make a gift of cash, securities or other assets (house, condo, land, etc.) to Immaculate Conception Church or School and are guaranteed a fixed income stream for life. You can receive an immediate tax deduction too.

6) **Often Overlooked Assets** such as Certificates of Deposit, Bonds, and Real Estate all qualify as Planned Gifts.

7) **Remembering the Church in your Obituary. In your Will or Funeral Plan,** inform your family that you wish to have these words included in your Obituary: "in lieu of flowers, memorials preferred to Immaculate Conception Church".

I am available to discuss with you any of the items above under no pressure or obligation. Privacy and confidentiality are guaranteed.

God Bless You,

Father John Mitchell
(Pastor, Immaculate Conception Church)

