

PLANNING A FUNERAL MASS

We know this is an extremely difficult time and families are faced with many decisions when planning for the funeral of a loved one. This document is to guide you through the planning and ease your decision-making process. Please know that we are here to help you and make this process as easy as we can for you and your family.

Scheduling the Mass: After your loved one passes, please contact the parish office (636)227-7440 to schedule the funeral or memorial Mass. All of our priests believe deeply in their calling to bury the dead, console the grieving and minister to the families and friends of the deceased and all are available to preside at funeral and memorial Masses. We will schedule the priest for your loved one's Mass after consulting their schedules and availability.

Visitations: We do allow visitations to take place one hour prior to funerals or Memorial Masses. Visitations typically take place in our vestibule. We have easels and tables available for displaying photos, albums, and other memorabilia. We have a podium that can hold a guest book if you decide to bring one. Once you decide which items you will need, call the Parish Office at (636) 227-7440.

Mass Planning: Once the Mass is scheduled and the presiding priest is set, we will schedule a planning meeting for you, him and any additional family members who are helping to plan the Mass. At the meeting, the priest will help you select the readings and hymns. He will want you to share information about your loved one for his homily and the official church record. He will ask if you have family members or friends who would like to proclaim the readings or petitions, serve as Eucharistic Ministers, present the offertory gifts, or provide music. If you do not have family or friends to handle any of these tasks, we will arrange for readers, servers, and/or a musician and cantor. Just let the priest or Sandy know.

To assist you in planning, we have enclosed a booklet and a list of suggested hymns for each part of the Mass. From the booklet, you will need to pick the first reading, the responsorial psalm (which is usually sung), and the second reading. The priest will help you choose the Gospel reading. We have also enclosed a Funeral Planning form on which you can note the choices you make. We've highlighted the items for you to choose. The priests can certainly offer suggestions if you are unsure. If you have any special readings that you do not see listed in the booklet, just let the priest know. If you are going to make a program, we can provide several examples. Unfortunately, we are not able to print the programs at our office.

Church Set-up: Whether a funeral or a memorial Mass, we want you to be able to remember your loved one at Mass. We will have a covered table in front of the altar. We invite families to bring a photo of their loved one, preferably 8x10, to place on the table. You may also want to bring a small vase with a

flower or flowers for the table. You can bring this to the Parish Office a day or two prior to the Mass.

Luncheon: Holy Infant offers a luncheon for the families of deceased parishioners following the Mass or burial. Luncheons are provided by our Helping Hands ministry and usually take place in our lower cafeteria. The menu consists of ham, hot side dishes such as green bean and potato casseroles, salads, desserts, and beverages. We typically plan for 40-50 people, but we like to get a more accurate count from each family during the planning process. There is no cost for the luncheon, but we do ask for a donation to pay it forward to the next family mourning the loss of a loved one. Any amount is appreciated. Many often ask for a suggested amount. We estimate that the cost of the luncheon is \$3.00 per person.

Donations and Offerings: Since you are not working with a funeral home, we will handle the church offerings with you directly. The offerings should be brought to your planning meeting, so that you do not need to worry about them on the day of your Mass. Here are the offerings requested:

- Use of the church: \$150.00
- Musician: \$125.00
- Cantor/singer: \$100.00
- Honorarium for priest: Most families provide the priest with an honorarium for his service during the planning and funeral. The amount is up to each family but is usually at least \$100.00.
- Luncheon: Again, we provide the luncheon at no charge for our parishioners. If you would like to make a donation to help this ministry continue to provide these luncheons, it would be greatly appreciated.

Mass of Remembrance: Each fall near the Feasts of All Saints and All Souls, we have a special Mass to remember those family members and friends we have lost during the past year. As a special part of our Holy Infant family, we mourn with you and we join with you at this Mass in asking for healing and in giving thanks for those who have gone before us in faith. You and your family will receive an invitation to this Mass at which we will announce the names of the deceased and have candles in memory of each of person. It is solemn, but hopeful and comforting liturgy and we hope you will attend.

If you have any questions, call the Parish Office at (636) 227-7440.