

Funeral Procedures and Protocol for The Church of the Epiphany

Introduction

“In the face of death, the Church confidently proclaims that God has created each person for eternal life and that Jesus, the Son of God, by his death and resurrection, has broken the chains of sin and death that bound humanity. Christ “achieved his task of redeeming humanity and giving perfect glory to God, principally in the paschal mystery of his blessed passion, resurrection from the dead, and glorious ascension.” [...]

“The Church through its funeral rites commends the dead to God’s merciful love and pleads for the forgiveness of sins. At the funeral rites, especially at the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice, the Christian community affirms and expresses the union of the Church on earth with the Church in heaven in one great communion of saints. Though separated from the living, the dead are still at one with the community of believers on earth and benefit from their prayers and intercession”

~ Order of Christian Funerals, Introduction

When a Death Occurs

Initial Contact with the Parish

Epiphany parish offices are open from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday (closed Saturday and Sunday.) When the parish office is closed, please follow phone prompts to leave a message and when the office opens, you will be contacted by Teresa McCarthy to begin the funeral planning process.

Location and Form of the Funeral Rites

Mass of Christian Burial at Epiphany

The standard funeral liturgy for a deceased Catholic, who was in good standing with the Church, is a Mass, with the body present. In the case of a public sinner (a person who publically has taken actions or positions in opposition to the Catholic faith without repenting), the family should consult with the pastor regarding what course of action would be most appropriate.

The following options are all forms of Catholic Funeral. In making a decision of where a funeral should take place and which rites to use, the following can serve as general guidelines:

- For, active parishioners, the homebound, former active parishioners of Epiphany, who are now residents of nursing homes or who have moved away from the parish for such reasons as retirement or to be with family, a Mass of Christian Burial held at Epiphany is encouraged.

- For active Catholics, who were part of the Epiphany Catholic community, but have now established roots within other parishes, a Mass of Christian Burial at their current parish (with the option for burial at Epiphany Cemetery) is most fitting.
- A Catholic funeral may be celebrated (even a Mass) for a person who is not a Catholic, as long as this would not offend the sensibilities of those who attend. This case may arise when the living spouse is Catholic, and the spouse who died practiced no religion.
- For Catholics who have fallen away from the practice of their faith, a Funeral led by an Epiphany priest or deacon at the Funeral Home is permitted.
- A Mass can always be celebrated for a child who has died, even without baptism. Appropriate prayers are used if the child was not baptized.

If you are unfamiliar with a Mass of Christian Burial, please review the entire document, but especially the Eulogy Section on page 5.

If a family is unsure what would be most appropriate for them, please ask Teresa McCarthy during the initial funeral intake.

The following policies and procedures are for funeral Masses held at Epiphany only. For funerals held elsewhere, please speak with Teresa McCarthy.

Policies and Procedures for Masses of Christian Burial at Epiphany

Time for the Funeral Liturgy

In general, funerals are scheduled Monday-Friday at 10:30 a.m. with reviewal beginning at 9:30 a.m. Exceptions to this are at the discretion of the Pastor. Funerals are not scheduled on Saturdays and Sundays, Holy Days of Obligation, Ash Wednesday, All Souls Day (Nov. 2) and during the Easter Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday).

Funerals with a Funeral Director

The standard procedure for planning a funeral at Epiphany Catholic Church is that a funeral director (funeral home or mortuary) work with Epiphany's parish staff to set up the details of the visitation, funeral Mass or liturgy, luncheon and interment. Funeral directors are very helpful to the parish in that they arrange for the times of the events, assist in setting up for the visitation if it is held at Epiphany, and help the family in coordinating the luncheon and the interment. They also provide valuable assistance with programs, easels and tables for pictures and 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 Epiphany to determine possible times and dates for a funeral Mass/Liturgy. The family will meet with the funeral director and confirm the date/time. Family members should then contact Epiphany to arrange for a meeting with the priest or deacon who will preside at the funeral. This is to choose scripture readings, hymns, and other details of the funeral liturgy.

Funerals without a Funeral Director

If the family of the deceased is not using a funeral home/director with the funeral arrangements, a family member must contact Teresa McCarthy at the Epiphany parish offices to select a date for the funeral as well as to schedule a meeting with one of the priests to plan the funeral liturgy.

Funeral Fee

The fee for a **funeral with a funeral director is \$450** and is based on costs including but not limited to: services rendered by Epiphany staff, the use of the Church, printing worship aides, musicians. The funeral home collects this fee and submits it to Epiphany along with the clergy record.

The fee for a **funeral with NO funeral director is \$650**. If no funeral home is involved it is the responsibility of the family to pay the parish directly. This fee of \$650 is due at the time the family requests that a funeral date be set on the calendar.*

Stipend

While no stipend is expected, families often choose to make a gift as a sign of their appreciation for the pastoral services rendered by the presiding priest or deacon. In addition to the funeral service itself, this may include wake/vigil and burial services.

*In case of financial hardship such as county assistance, all fees may be waived at the discretion of the pastor.

Reviews/Visitations

Reviews/visitations take place in the back of the Church. Set-up (flowers, easels, etc.) may take place anytime, however, caskets may only be set up after daily Mass and rosary are finished (around 9:00 a.m.)

Memorials

Flowers may be left for use in the church and chapel at the discretion of the family as a temporary memorial to the deceased.

Monetary memorials may be directed to Epiphany. There are many projects for the family to consider with a wide range in value. If a family would like to pursue this option please speak with our Business Administrator.

Guest Priest/Deacon

If the family of the deceased requests a guest clergy, the presider from Epiphany is to be informed. Unless the guest presider is a family member of the deceased person, the funeral liturgy will be presided over by an Epiphany priest or deacon. The guest priest/deacon will always be welcome to concelebrate (or assist in the case of a deacon) as long as he is in good standing (a status confirmed by speaking with the chancery of the Archdiocese). At the discretion of the presider, the guest priest/deacon may be permitted to give the homily, final commendation and lead the service at the cemetery. Normally, a guest priest or deacon will not preside at a funeral liturgy.

Eulogies

The Vigil Service (Wake), held at the funeral home, is part of the funeral rites. The Vigil Service, by its very nature, is meant to address the need of the grieving family to remember the life that was lived and to mourn the loss that they have suffered. The Vigil Service is the appropriate time to share stories and eulogies about the deceased. It is also the time to incorporate favorite music, whether sacred or secular, to read poetry, and accommodate other wishes and desires the family has to help them grieve their loss and celebrate their loved one's life in a more personalized manner that is not necessarily appropriate for the more formal, Catholic Funeral Rites.

If the family opts out of having a Vigil Service the night before the funeral, these ways of remembering their loved one and celebrating his or her life should be done at the funeral luncheon.

In cases of large funerals, where the attendance exceeds the space available for the luncheon or the vigil, alternatives to this policy can be discussed and considered with the pastor.

Eulogies are not permitted within the Funeral Mass itself according to the revised *Order of Christian Funerals* for the United States, which says, "A brief homily based on the readings should always be given at the funeral liturgy, but never any kind of eulogy." [OCF # 141] The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* promulgated in 2000, reaffirms this prohibition of eulogies at funeral Masses saying, "At the Funeral Mass there should, as a rule, be a short homily, but never a eulogy of any kind."

"The funeral liturgy is a celebration of salvation and mercy, of grace and eternal life. It is not meant to be a commemoration (much less a canonization) of the person who has died. Extended remembering of the deceased often results in forgetting the Lord"
(Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk of Cincinnati).

Cremation

Policy of the Archdiocese: Priests assigned to a parish are delegated to grant permission for a funeral liturgy to be celebrated in the presence of cremated remains. Prior to giving this permission, the priest must consider the reasons for the request and receive the necessary assurance that the cremated remains will be handled with reverence and will be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium.

Burial

Epiphany Catholic Church maintains its own cemetery. Families may make arrangements for burial here through the funeral director they are working with or, if they are not working with a funeral home, by speaking with Bob Mathewson by calling the parish offices.

Luncheon

Families choosing to have a luncheon after a funeral are welcome to do so at Epiphany. To comply with changes to Minnesota State laws effective in 2012, all funeral lunches served at Epiphany must be provided by a licensed and insured caterer. At the time of your planning meeting you may meet with our on-site caterer to arrange for your funeral luncheon. Our luncheon committee will set-up the lunch room, serve the meal, and clean up afterwards. Payment for the catering is due immediately following the luncheon. If the estimated cost of the luncheon has been pre-paid by the funeral home, any remaining balance is due at this time. If the amount pre-paid exceeds the actual cost of the luncheon, all remaining food will be packaged and presented to the family.

Families choosing not to have a funeral luncheon may still opt to have dessert, coffee, and juice after a funeral at no cost to the family, though donations to the funeral committee are accepted.

Please note that on Fridays of Lent we will not serve any meat in observance of the Church's laws regarding abstinence from meat on the Fridays of Lent (*Code of Canon Law*, 1251).

Epiphany "E" Catering

The Church of the Epiphany
1900 111th Ave. NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55433

- Contact – Rhonda Dillon 763 862-4321 or cell 763 242-4547
Director of Catering & Hospitality
- Pulled Pork or Beef Sandwiches, 2 Side Salads, Cookies \$7.00 per person*
- Mostaccioli, Caesar Salad, Bread Sticks, cookies \$6.00 per person
- Cold Cut Sandwiches, 2 Side Salads, Relish Tray, Cookies \$5.50 per person*
- Other options available*

*Please note that on Fridays of Lent we will not serve any meat in observance of the Church's laws regarding abstinence from meat on the Fridays of Lent (*Code of Canon Law*, 1251).