

End-of-Life Planning for a Catholic Person

Funeral Service

The Right to a Catholic Funeral

The Code of Canon Law (the Church's law book) states clearly that deceased Catholics are to have ecclesiastical (Church) funerals, to support the deceased, honoring their bodies, and comforting the living. "The Church earnestly recommends that the pious custom of burying the bodies of the deceased be observed; nevertheless, the Church does not prohibit cremation unless it was chosen for reasons contrary to Christian doctrine" (1176).

Planning your Funeral

Articulating your desire for a Catholic funeral to those who will likely survive you is very important, if your survivors are to respect the wishes your wishes, insofar as possible.

The Cathedral of Saint Peter owns and operates **Green Mount Catholic Cemetery** and encourages your use of this sacred ground for burial. Pre-planning is encouraged. Contact the cemetery office at (618) 234-4858. Pre-planning the entire funeral with a funeral director may also be to your advantage.

What information would you like to appear in your obituary? If you do not wish to write it, have you asked someone else to? Where should it appear? Generally, the funeral home places it on their website. Newspapers often charge for its placement in their publications.

Upon Death

Notify your survivors of your chosen funeral home. The funeral director will assist in caring for the remains before the funeral, choosing burial or cremation, whether to have the casket open at the wake, choosing a cemetery and headstone, arranging for embalming, hair care, clothing, and make-up, if applicable, transporting the remains, coordinating with the church and cemetery to confirm all the details.

Planning the Funeral Services

Consider what funeral service(s) you would like. Do you wish to have a wake, viewing, or visitation the night before or morning of the funeral? Would you like to have a Vigil for the Deceased (a scripture service) or the Rosary at the wake? At the funeral home or church?

With few exceptions, the funeral Mass should take place in the church. A funeral Mass is not permitted at the funeral home, although a Word service is permitted there, for good reason.

Do you have songs and Scripture readings that are meaningful to you which would be appropriate for a funeral?

Typically, the interment (burial) occurs immediately after the funeral service, with prayers offered by the priest or deacon at the graveside.

The Cathedral parish offers the option of a funeral luncheon following the burial, or if the burial is at some distance, immediately after the funeral. The funeral director can help coordinate that with the parish staff.

Proper Disposition of the Remains

From the *Order of Christian Funerals*: For the final disposition of the body, it is the ancient Christian custom to bury or entomb the bodies of the dead; cremation is permitted, unless it is evident that cremation was chosen for anti-Christian motives.

Proper disposition of the remains in a columbarium, grave, or mausoleum is required (spreading ashes is not permitted by the Church).

Temporal Concerns

This checklist does not constitute legal advice.

- All bank accounts should have direct beneficiaries.
- Transfer-on-Death Deed for home-owners
- Living Will: Articulates clear wishes in the event you cannot speak for yourself when it comes to healthcare decisions as well as other final decisions.
- Durable Power of Attorney: Designates a person to make legal decisions.
- Power of Attorney for Healthcare: Designates someone to make healthcare decisions.
- Last Will and Testament: Designates to whom personal belongings will go.
- Create a list of all banks and investment institutions with account numbers, credit cards, utility accounts, etc. How and when are these things paid?
- Insure heirs know location of life insurance policies.
- Insure heirs know computer, phone, and bank ID, account logins, and passwords.
- Insure heirs know location of titles for all vehicles, campers, property.
- Consider setting up a trust for intended beneficiaries, especially those that are young, and appoint a trustee.
- Disclose to your heirs all your wishes.
- Notify designees for health care, power of attorney, and others, and notify heirs whom you did not designate.

Funeral Wishes for	
Date	
Updates	
Church of Funeral	
Funeral Home	
Cemetery Information	
Preferred Hair Stylist	

	I wish to have a Catholic funeral Mass at the church.
	I wish to have a Catholic funeral at the funeral home, without Mass .
	I will write my own obituary .
	I have asked to write my obituary.
	I would like my obituary to appear in these publications:
	I wish for my body to be buried in a grave (full-body burial).
	I wish for my body to be interred in a mausoleum.
	I wish to be cremated , with my remains being interred in a columbarium, niche, mausoleum, or grave.
	Other
	I wish to have a wake at the funeral home with a Scripture Service.
	I wish to have a wake at the funeral home with a Rosary.
	I wish to have a wake at the funeral home with no "service."
	I wish to have a wake at the church with a Scripture Service.
	I wish to have a wake at the church with a Rosary.
	I wish to have a wake at the church with no "service."

	I wish to have the casket open at my wake.
	I wish to have the casket closed at my wake.
	Songs I would like to be sung/played at my funeral Mass/service:
Funeral Reading Suggestions may be found on the website: www.cathedralbelle.org/funeral-planner	
	An Old Testament Reading for my funeral:
	A New Testament Epistle Reading for my funeral:
	A Gospel Reading for my funeral:
	I wish to have a funeral lunch at the Cathedral.
	I wish to have a funeral lunch at another location:
	I do not wish to have a funeral lunch.

Other funeral wishes: