

My child was not baptized, is it possible to have a Catholic Service? Yes it is.

Burial of Children

The Order of Christian Funerals provides a complete Vigil Service, Funeral Mass with Final Commendation and a Rite of Committal for the funeral of a child (OCF 234-342).

Various texts for a baptized child or a child who died before baptism make the rites fully adaptable to a given situation.

A child who died before baptism may be given Christian funeral rites if the parents intended to have the child baptized (Canon 1183 #2). The family of the deceased child and the pastoral ministers should determine the appropriate funeral rites for the child.

Burial of Fetuses, Stillborns and Amputated Limbs

The Church urges that stillborns and fetuses of Catholic parents be interred in a Catholic cemetery. The decision and procedure are left to the parents and pastoral ministers. Appropriate prayers may be found in Part V of the Ritual OCF.

It is recommended that amputated limbs be buried in a blessed place. However, hospital personnel may dispose of portions of bodies in a manner they deem most suitable and hygienic. The preference of the person and family are not to be disregarded.

My husband/wife/friend/relative was not baptized, is it possible to have a Catholic Service?

Burial of Catechumens

Catechumens are entitled to the full rites of Christian burial. Even though they are unbaptized, they are members of the household of the Church (Canon 1183 #1). Care must be taken not to use the symbols of baptism but rather to reflect upon the love and mercy of the Lord.

Burial of Non-Catholic Christians

Catholic burial, including the Funeral Mass, is permitted for a baptized non-Catholic who might reasonably be presumed to desire or prefer Catholic burial services. Such a decision would be appropriate where the non-Catholic party worshiped regularly at the Catholic Church or identified with the Catholic Church more than any other. It would not be appropriate if the deceased were an active member of a non-Catholic Christian Church, except in the case where the minister of the deceased were unavailable (Canon 1183 #3).

Can a Catholic Church deny a Service?

Denial of Burial

Under certain circumstances Christian burial is inappropriate. Canon 1184 states that, unless they have given some signs of repentance before their death, the following are to be deprived of ecclesiastical funeral rites:

1. Notorious apostates, heretics and schismatic's.
2. Persons who have chosen cremation of their own bodies for reasons opposed to the Christian faith.
3. Other manifest sinners for whom ecclesiastical funeral rites cannot be granted without public scandal to the faithful.

Should the priest seriously believe that Christian burial should be denied, he must consult the chancellor of the diocese.

Those who commit suicide, those who have neglected the celebration of the sacraments, those who are involved in invalid marriages and those who have incurred excommunication or interdict are not to be denied Christian burial.

Is there a charge for the Catholic Service?

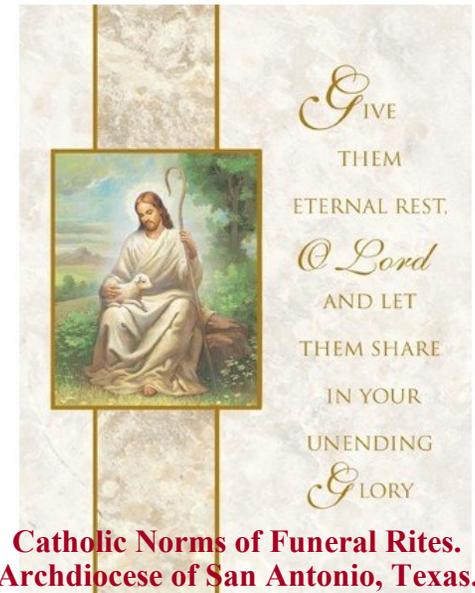
Offerings for Funeral Rites

There may be no set charge or fee for the services of the church. Gifts or stipends should remain freewill offerings. Any appearance of a set fee or charge should be carefully avoided both by priests and funeral directors.

No one should be deprived of funeral rites because of an inability to give an offering-(Canon 1181).

I. Charity Burials

Inability to meet the cost of burial is never to be a deterrent to burial. In the face of financial hardship and the absence of sources of public and other funds, the parish priest should initiate action for charity burial. The collection taken on All Souls Day might be used to establish a parish fund to be used for funeral and bereavement ministries. OCF



- Southwest Deanery
Divine Providence Parish
(210) 623-3970
Our Lady of the Angels Parish
(210) 924-6591
St. Vincent de Paul Parish
(210) 674-1200
St. Bonaventure Parish
(210) 922-1685
St. Clare Parish
(210) 924-5252
St. Lawrence Parish
(210) 924-4401
St. Leonard Parish
(210) 924-6000
St. Henry Parish
(210) 225-6877
St. Joseph South San Parish
(210) 924-4383
St. James Parish
(210) 924-1201
St. Leo the Great
(210) 533-9108

THE GUIDELINES FOR FUNERAL RITES

Catholic funeral services consist of three parts: a vigil, the funeral Mass, and then the Rite of Committal.

After Death Occurs: After the death, a priest should be contacted so that the necessary rites can be administered and the funeral planning process can begin.

In coordination with the Pastor or Pastoral Administrator and Pastoral Staff, the family of the deceased and the Funeral Director chosen by the family arrange the place and set the time for the Vigil, the Funeral Liturgy and the Rite of Committal.

What are the teachings of the Catholic Church for Funerals?

The most important aspect about Catholic funerals is that they express the Christian hope in eternal life and the resurrection of the body on the last day. The Church has the responsibility to assure that these important rites are carried out with decorum and dignity.

What are the components of the Catholic funeral rites?

A. VIGIL FOR THE DECEASED: The vigil for the dead is intended to be dedicated to prayer for the deceased. The Vigil for the Deceased is celebrated during the time scheduled for the wake and is the principal rite celebrated by the Church in the time following death and before the Funeral Liturgy. Devotions such as the rosary may also be prayed. The Vigil may be celebrated in the home of the deceased, in the funeral home, in a suitable place associated with the church building.

B. MASS OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL:

The funeral liturgy is the central liturgical celebration of the Christian community for the deceased. When one of its members dies, the Church encourages the celebration of the funeral liturgy at a Mass.

Christian funerals “offer worship, praise and thanksgiving to God for the gift of life which has now been returned to God” (Order of Christian Funerals, No. 5).

The Mass is the normal way to celebrate the Catholic funeral. If the family wishes a burial without Mass, they should consult with the priest. Perhaps our loved one had been separated from the Church for a long time and a funeral Mass wouldn't seem the most appropriate.

Are Some specific days/time that the mass can not be celebrated?

Excluded Days. The Funeral Mass has first place among the masses for the dead and may be celebrated on any day except solemnities of obligation: In the United States, the Holy Days of Obligation are: Mary, the Mother of God January 1' Ascension Thursday Assumption of Mary August 15; All Saints November 1; Immaculate Conception December 8; Christmas December 2

Time and Place. The local parish determines appropriate times for Funeral Masses. The funeral may be scheduled in the morning, afternoon or evening. The funeral rites are to be scheduled at times that permit as many of the community as possible to be present (OCF 11).

Although the funeral liturgy will normally be celebrated in the parish church to which the deceased belonged, it is possible to choose any Catholic church for a funeral liturgy, provided the pastor of that church agrees and the pastor of the deceased has been informed (Canon 1177).

Can the Mass be celebrated in the funeral home? The Funeral Mass may not be celebrated in funeral homes or in cemetery chapels. (Canon 1179)

Specific Catholic Funeral Mass Arrangements.

Throughout the service, no matter who is leading, **p e o p l e m a y p a r t i c i p a t e** as readers, musicians, pallbearers, ushers, and in other usual roles. The music played at the Funeral Mass should be appropriate church music; popular or non-religious music is not appropriate. *"The Vigil is the proper time for any funeral eulogy, not the Mass."*

C. THE RITE OF COMMITTAL—FUNERAL POLICY.

The Rite of Committal is celebrated at the place of burial or interment, or mausoleum and never in the church.

1. The Rite of Committal, whether at an interment chapel, at a mausoleum or at a graveside, is a gathering of the faithful for prayer.

2. Military services and certain cultural or social rites are permissible at the cemetery only. These other services should be arranged in advance with the local parish priest and coordinated in such a way that they do not disrupt or distract from the integrity of the liturgical committal service. Funeral directors are called upon to assist in the coordination of these elements, and to safeguard the integrity of the Church's liturgy at the Rite of Committal.

3. If a lengthy time has passed since the celebration of the Funeral Mass, or if the funeral has been conducted overseas or in a distant state, the Rite of Committal with Final Commendation (OCF #224-233) may be more appropriate.

What the Church teaches regarding Organ donation, cremation and embalming?

Organ Donation

Though there is some disagreement within the Catholic Church on the acceptability of organ donation, many Catholic leaders have accepted the medical definition of “brain death” (the end of brain function as the end of life) and see organ donation as a final charitable act that one may make.

Embalming

Embalming is acceptable in the Catholic faith, and depending on the rules of the state and/or the funeral home that you're working with, embalming before the Vigil may be necessary.

Cremation

The Church recognizes there are legitimate reasons for cremation including “sanitary, economic or social” circumstances but it states that “the ashes of the faithful must be laid to rest in a sacred place, that is, in a cemetery or, in certain cases, in a church or an area, which has been set aside for this purpose, and so dedicated by the competent ecclesial authority.

The instruction has made clear the reason why cremains are not to be kept in private homes.

Likewise, cremated ashes are not to be scattered in the atmosphere or made into jewelry or keepsakes. The Instruction reminds Catholics that cremation is not permissible if this intention of so disposing the ashes has been made before the funeral.

The burial of ashes or their reservation in a sacred place “ensures that they are not excluded from the prayers and remembrance of their family or the Christian community” – an essential practice of the Faith.