

Liturgy of the Word for a Funeral Mass

You can choose the first reading from the Old Testament. The Responsorial Psalm is normally sung. However, if it is not being sung you can choose a Psalm for reading from the Responsorial Psalm section. You can select the second reading from the New Testament. You may also suggest one of the Gospels from the list below.



Running Order of Readings at a Funeral Mass

1. 1st Reading
2. Responsorial Psalm (Possibly Sung)
3. 2nd Reading
4. Gospel (Read by Priest/Deacon)
5. Homily (Short reflection given by Priest/Deacon)
6. Prayer of the Faithful (Intercessions - 5 max.)

Old Testament Readings

(The first reading comes from the Old Testament)

A reading from the book of Wisdom:

They are at peace with God
The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God,
no torment shall ever touch them.
In the eyes of the unwise, they did appear to die,
their going looked like a disaster,
their leaving us, like annihilation;
but they are in peace.
If they experienced punishment as people see it,
their hope was rich with immortality;
slight was their affliction, great will their blessing be.
God has put them to the test
and proved them worthy to be with him;
he has tested them like gold in a furnace,
and accepted them as a holocaust.
They who trust in him will understand the truth,
those who are faithful will live with him in love;
for grace and mercy await those he has chosen.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Wisdom:

Grace and mercy await the chosen of the Lord
The virtuous, though they die before their time, will find rest.
Length of days is not what makes age honourable,
nor number of years the true measure of life;
understanding, this is grey hairs,
untarnished life, this is ripe old age.
They sought to please God, so God has loved them.
They have been carried off so that evil may not warp their understanding or
treachery seduce their soul;
Coming to perfection in so short a while,
they have achieved long life;
Grace and mercy await the chosen of the Lord.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah:

The Lord will destroy death forever
On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will prepare for all peoples
a banquet of rich food.
On this mountain he will remove
the mourning veil covering all peoples,
and the shroud enwrapping all nations,
he will destroy death for ever.
The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek;
he will take away his peoples shame
everywhere on earth, for the Lord has said so.
That day, it will be said: See, this is our God
in whom we hoped for salvation;
The Lord is the one in whom we hoped.
We exult and we rejoice that he has saved us.

The word of the Lord.



A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes:

There is a time for dying.
There is a season for everything,
a time for every occupation under heaven:
A time for giving birth,
a time for dying; a time for planting;
a time for uprooting what has been planted.
A time for killing,
a time for healing;
a time for knocking down.
A time for building.
A time for tears, a time for laughter;
a time for mourning, a time for dancing.
A time for throwing stones away,
a time for gathering them up;
a time for embracing,
a time to refrain from embracing.
A time for searching,
a time for losing;
a time for keeping,
a time for throwing away.
A time for tearing,
a time for sewing;
a time for keeping silent, a time for speaking.
A time for loving, a time for hating; a time for war,
a time for peace.

The word of the Lord.

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah:

Do not be afraid for I have redeemed you,
I have called you by name, you are mine. Should you pass through the sea, I will be with you; or through rivers, they will not swallow you up. Should you walk through fire, you will not be scorched and the flames will not burn you, for I am Yahweh your God, the Holy one of Israel, your Saviour.
You are precious in my eyes; you are honoured and I love you.
Do not be afraid, for I am with you.

This is the Word of the Lord.



A reading from the Book of Ecclesiasticus:

I will give thanks to you, Lord and King,
and praise you, God my saviour,
I give thanks to your name;
for you have been protector and support to me,
and redeemed my body from destruction.

I will praise your name unceasingly,
and gratefully sing its praises.
And my plea was heard,
for you saved me from destruction,
you delivered me from that time of evil.

And therefore I will thank you and praise you,
and bless the name of the Lord.

The word of the Lord

A reading from the book of Proverbs:

A perfect wife – who can find her?
 She is far beyond the price of pearls.
Her husband's heart has confidence in her,
 from her he will derive no little profit.
Advantage and not hurt she brings him,
 all the days of her life.
She is always busy with wool and with flax,
 she does her work with eager hands.
She sets her hands to the distaff,
 her fingers grasp the spindle.
She holds out her hand to the poor,
 she opens her arms to the needy.
Charm is deceitful, and beauty empty;
 the woman who is wise is the one to praise.
Give her a share in what her hands have worked for,
 and let her works tell her praises at the city gates.

The word of the Lord



A reading from the Book of Sirach:

Let us praise illustrious ancestors who have gone before us. Some of them have left a name behind, while others have passed through almost unnoticed. However, the lord never forgets their contribution to this world. In their descendants, their remains a rich inheritance born of them. Their descendants stand by their covenants and thanks to them, so do their children's children. Their offspring will last forever and their glory will never fade. Though their bodies have been laid to rest, their names will live for generations. The people who acclaim their wisdom and the assembly will celebrate their praises.

The word of the Lord

A reading from the Book of Sirach:

Children, listen to me for I am your father:
Do what I tell you, and so be safe.

Whoever respects a father expiates sins,
whoever honours a mother,
is like someone amassing a fortune.
Whoever respects a father,
will in turn be happy with children,
the day they pray for help, they will be heard.

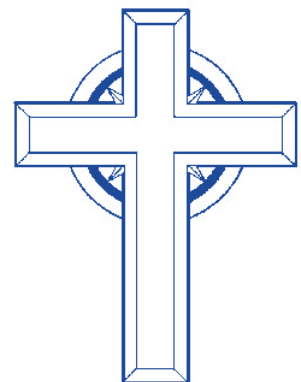
Respect your father in deed as well as word,
so that a blessing may come on you from him.

My child, support your father in his old age,
do not grieve him during his life.

Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy,
do not despise him in your health and strength;
for kindness to a father will not be forgotten
but will serve as reparation for your sins.

On your own day of ordeal God will remember you:
like frost in the sunshine, your sins will melt away.

The word of the Lord.



Responsorial Psalm

(This is only read if you do not intend having music at the funeral mass)

Response: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd;
There is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me to revive my drooping spirit.

Response

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort.

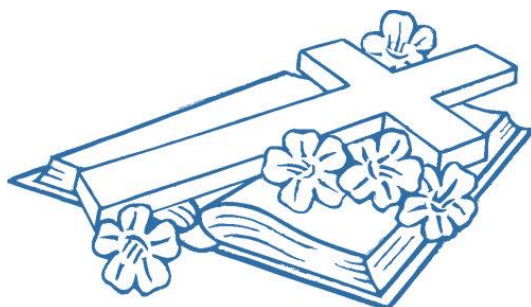
Response

You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.

Response

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

Response



Response: My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life.

Like a deer that yearns
For running streams,
So my soul is yearning
For you my God.

Response

My soul is thirsting for God,
The God of my life;
When can I enter and see
The face of God?

Response.

By day the Lord will send
His loving kindness;
By night I will sing to him,
Praise the God of my life.

Response.

Why are you cast down, my soul,
Why groan within me?
Hope in God; I will praise him still
My Saviour and my God.

Response.



New Testament Readings

(The second reading comes from the New Testament)

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans:

With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us – he rose from the dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.

Nothing therefore can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked. These are the trials through which we triumph, by the power of him who loved us.

For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, not any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.



The word of the Lord.

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse:

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say to me, 'Write down: Happy are those who die in the Lord! Happy indeed, the Spirit says; now they can rest for ever after their work, since their good deeds go with them.'

The word of the Lord.

A Reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans:

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians:

If I have all the eloquence of men or of angels, but speak without love, I am simply a gong booming or a cymbal clashing. If I have the gift of prophecy, understanding all the mysteries there are, and knowing everything, and if I have faith in all its fullness, to move mountains, but without love, then I am nothing at all. If I give away all that I possess, piece by piece, and if I even let them take my body to burn it, but am without love, it will do me no good whatever.

Love is always patient and kind; it is never jealous; love is never boastful or conceited; it is never rude or selfish; it does not take offence and is not resentful. Love takes no pleasure in other people's sins but delights in the truth; it is always ready to excuse, to trust, to hope, and to endure whatever comes.

Love does not come to an end. In short, there are three things that last: faith, hope and love; and the greatest of these is love.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians:

For us, our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the saviour we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. He will do that by the same power with which he can subdue the whole universe.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians:

We want you to be quite certain, brothers and sisters about those who have died, to make sure that you do not grieve about them, like the other people who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that it will be the same for those who have died in Jesus: God will bring them with him. So we shall stay with the Lord forever. With such thoughts as these you should comfort one another.

The word of the Lord.

A reading from the first letter of St John:

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us, by letting us be called Gods children; and that is what we are. Because the world refused to acknowledge him, therefore it does not acknowledge us. My dear people, we are already the children of God but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed; all we know is, that when it is revealed we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is.

The word of the Lord.

Prayer of the Faithful

(Choose four or five of the following. If you wish you can compose some of your own or adapt some of the following)

In baptism N died with Christ. May he/she now share in the fullness of his resurrection. Lord, hear us

We pray for the family, relatives and friends of N., that they may find strength and consolation in their Christian faith and in the love and support of this community. Lord, hear us

We pray for all of us here today, that our memory of N., whom we loved, may inspire us with renewed love for all our sisters and brothers. Lord, hear us

We pray that the God of all consolation, will help us to comfort one another in our grief: finding light in times of darkness, and faith in times if doubt. Lord, hear us

We pray for those who care for the sick and the dying, especially those who cared for N., during his/her illness. Lord hear us

We pray for all the faithful departed; that they may see God face to face in the kingdom of Heaven. Lord hear us

