

## R.C. PASTORAL CENTRE

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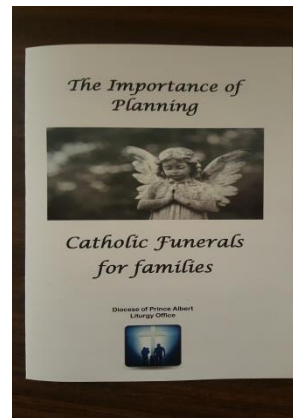
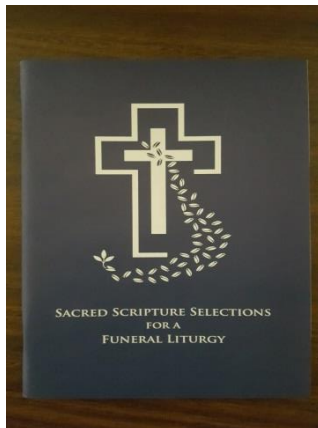
## OFFICE OF LITURGY

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### Prince Albert Guideline & Policy for Funeral Liturgies in our Diocese: Pastor and Parish

\*Contact pastor before finalizing any time or day for funeral liturgies: Often family come in with a plan already in place for when and how they want things to happen, through discussion help them to understand that their pastor may have prior commitments but will do his best to accommodate what will work for the family.

\*Have resources available for the family: The Diocese of Prince Albert has a resource booklet which highlights the importance of funeral liturgies and all the different aspects that should be looked at when planning a funeral. As well, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops have published a resource booklet in order to help families choose readings for the funeral liturgies. These resources are made so that families may take them and keep them.



\*\*As our society changes and many of our elderly today do not have children who practise their faith it is to be encouraged that people talk with their families ahead of time about such details in their funerals that when the time comes the process for those left behind may be easier.

\*As arrangements are made it is important for details such as any contributions to the Church be clear: These contributions are meant to cover the very real costs incurred by the parish, these include: maintaining the facility, pastors salary, educational programs and secretarial time (for documentation and preparation of certificates and reporting to the Diocesan Office). It is a question of justice that we cover the costs, which govern the payment of these contributions.

\*\*However, it must be clear that the community will perform these services free of charge, and with joy, for anyone who can't afford to make an offering.

\*"What is fair and just?" For funerals in the Diocese \$200 is the standard amount, and it must be noted that these costs do not include any hall or lunch fees. Also, any contribution to the Church does not go to the priest, the priest is already being paid by the parish to provide services. If the family would like to give the priest a stipend, which is over and above what they give to the Church, it must be clearly stated in a separate envelope.

\*If the family would like a priest who is a family member or friend to celebrate: there must be permission in advance from the local pastor or parish administrator. The family must also take responsibility to cover any personal time and mileage (the church contributions go to and remain in the local church).

\*Regarding Cremation: There has been some confusion since the New Ritual book for funerals has been released. In a letter from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops it states: "The directives for funeral liturgies celebrated in the presence of cremated remains, as noted in the CCCB pamphlet "Catholics and Cremation", remain unchanged. The 1984 indult from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments is still in effect. "The cremated remains are put into a dignified container that shows reverence toward the person's remains. The container is then placed on a small table provided for this purpose. The liturgy will conclude with the Final Commendation. Signs or reverence toward the body, such as the sprinkling with holy water and the use of incense, may be used." The paschal Candle may also be lit and place in an appropriate location." In the Diocese of Prince Albert the urn is to be place in the same place at the front of the church that the casket is normally placed.

\*\*Such questions regarding a pall for cremated remains are that one is not used, however the urn may be placed on a white cloth which would serve as a symbol of the person's baptism.

\*Another common misconception surrounds receiving the body and who can do it: It is the custom in our Diocese for a layperson to preside at the funeral vigil on the evening before the funeral liturgy. The body or remains are to be welcomed at the vigil and remain at the front of the church after the vigil and through the celebration on the next day. These celebrations are meant to serve as one act of celebration and so that particular detail is not to be repeated by the priest at the funeral liturgy.

\*The question concerning eulogies: Our Diocesan Church recommends a brief (3-8 minutes) eulogy and this is properly done at the Vigil Prayer Service the evening before the Funeral Mass or at the reception lunch after the Funeral Mass or it is given before the Funeral Mass begins. The eulogy should concentrate upon the life of the loved one highlighting his/her faith journey, his/her virtues and qualities. It should express the family's and friends' affection and care. Good taste and good humour are appropriate. The challenge is to keep it brief, to the point, well balanced and pastoral.

\*\*A new reality has become power point presentations... These often are lengthy, elaborate and entertaining, however, power-point eulogies can come across as the centrepiece of the liturgy and can overshadowing and overwhelming everything else that the Funeral Mass stands for and seeks to teach. For this reason, they are rightfully placed at the Vigil Prayers the evening before the Funeral Mass or at the reception lunch after the Funeral Mass. These may be good moments when a number of persons may wish to speak and share their memories.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding any of the points mentioned in this letter, please contact the Liturgy Office and we will go through them together.