THE FUNERAL MASS

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.

– Order of Christian Funerals, 1

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Greeting

The priest greets the mourners at the entrance of the church, using one of these greetings or similar words. If the reception of the body took place at an earlier time, the Mass begins as usual.

Priest: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: And with your spirit.

Or:

Priest: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

All: And with your spirit.

Or:

Priest: The grace and peace of God our Father, who raised Jesus from the dead< be always with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Or:

Priest: May the Father of mercies, the God of all consolation, be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Sprinkling with Holy Water, Placing of the Pall, and Entrance Procession

The priest sprinkles the coffin with holy water. The pall, a large white cloth, may be placed on the coffin. Both are signs that in Baptism the deceased put on Christ. All process with the coffin into the church. The coffin comes to rest before the altar, with the Paschal candle, a symbol of the Risen Christ, nearby. A song accompanies the procession.
Placing of a Christian Symbol

One of the mourners may carry a symbol of the Christian life (a cross, Bible, or Book of the Gospels) in the entrance procession and place it on the coffin as it rests in front of the altar. The priest may incense the coffin as a sign that our prayers for the deceased person rise to heaven.

Collect Prayer

The priest invites the assembly to pray that God may show mercy to the deceased person and give comfort to the mourners. All respond “Amen” and are seated.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

The reader proclaims a passage from Sacred Scripture, which concludes:

Reader:  The word of the Lord.
All:  Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

The psalm is sung or proclaimed. All repeat the antiphon after the leader and between the verses of the psalm.

Second Reading

A second reading may be proclaimed. It concludes:

Reader:  The word of the Lord.
All:  Thanks be to God.

Acclamation and Verse before the Gospel

All stand for the Acclamation before the Gospel. All sing this acclamation, which is usually “Alleluia,” except during Lent. A verse from Scripture, sung by a cantor, follows, then all repeat the sung refrain. All remain standing.

Gospel

The deacon or priest proclaims a passage from one of the Gospel accounts.

Deacon/Priest:  The Lord be with you.
All:  And with your spirit.
Deacon/Priest:  A reading from the holy Gospel according to N.
All:  Glory to you, O Lord.

The people may make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.
Homily

The deacon or priest gives the homily, connecting the life of the deceased to the death and Resurrection of Christ.

Universal Prayer

We pray for the needs of the Church, the world, the deceased, and the mourners. After each petition, all respond, “Lord, hear our prayer,” or another appropriate response, as announced. After the petitions, the priest offers a concluding prayer, to which all respond, “Amen.”

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Gifts

The family of the deceased or others may present the gifts of bread and wine. An appropriate song may be sung. The priest prepares the altar and gifts. He then invites all to stand and prepare themselves for the Eucharistic Prayer, which gives thanks for our salvation through Christ’s death and Resurrection.

Invitation to Prayer

Priest: Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

All: May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Eucharistic Prayer Preface Dialogue

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right and just.

Preface Acclamation

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

**Memorial Acclamation**

**Priest:** The mystery of faith.  
**All:** We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.  
**Or:** When we eat this Bread and drink this cup we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.  
**Or:** Save us Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

**Doxology**

**Priest:** Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, forever and ever.  
**All:** Amen

**The Communion Rite**

**The Lord’s Prayer and Sign of Peace**

**Priest:** At the Savior’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:  
**All:** Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us: and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
Priest: Deliver, us, Lord, we pray . . .
as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our
Savior, Jesus Christ.

All: For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours
now and forever.

Priest: Lord Jesus Christ, . . .
Who live and reign forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Deacon/
Priest: Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Those gathered extend a sign of Christ’s peace (handshake, embrace, kiss, nod) to one another.

Breaking of Bread

All: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

Invitation to Holy Communion

Priest: Behold the Lamb of God,
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All: Lord, I am not worthy
that you should enter under my roof,
but only say the word
and my soul shall be healed.

The Reception of Holy Communion

As members of the community receive Holy Communion, a song is sung.

Prayer after Communion

Priest: Let us pray. . . . Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.
Final Commendation

Signs of Farewell

Before taking their leave, the mourners entrust their loved one to the care of God in the hope of being reunited with them one day. The coffin may be blessed with holy water and honored with incense.

Song of Farewell

Recognizing that we are surrounded by those who have gone before us in faith and by God’s holy angels, the assembly calls upon them to accompany the deceased into God’s presence. This or another appropriate song may be sung:

Cantor: Saints of God, come to his (her) aid!
Hasten to meet him (her), Angels of the Lord!

All: Receive his (her) soul and present him (her) to God the Most High.

Cantor: May Christ, who called you, take you to himself; may Angels lead you to the bosom of Abraham.

All: Receive his (her) soul and present him (her) to God the Most High.

Cantor: Eternal rest grant unto him (her), O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him (her).

All: Receive his (her) soul and present him (her) to God the Most High.

Prayer of Commendation

Priest: . . . Through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Procession to the Place of Committal

As the community follows the coffin to the back of the church, a song may be sung. If the procession continues to the place of burial, the singing may continue.

If the final commendation occurs at the place of committal at another time, the Mass concludes as usual after the Prayer after Communion.