

St. John the Evangelist Parish

9 Glen Road
Wellesley, Massachusetts 02481
781-235-0045
www.stjohnwellesley.org

Dear Friends in Christ,

The Funeral Mass is the central liturgical celebration of the Christian community for the deceased. At St. John Parish, we encourage you and your family to participate fully in planning the Mass. Please contact the parish (781-235-0045) and our pastoral staff will assist you in making these arrangements by offering suggestions and answering any questions you may have.

Our Music Director and Cantor will provide music that will enhance this celebration and encourage the full participation of the congregation in the songs, responses, and acclamations of the funeral rites. There are occasions when a family friend is requested to sing at a funeral. We know you will understand that a soloist, no matter how fine a singer, may not be comfortable or trained in the Ministry of Cantor, thus the need for the Parish Cantor to be present, even when a soloist has been engaged.

Please allow this document to serve as a guide to help you select the readings and music for the Funeral Mass. In each section, you will find selections of hymns and psalms that are examples of appropriate texts suitable for different times during the Mass. You are not limited to these examples and our staff will present you with a more comprehensive music list when we meet.

Be assured of our prayerful support for you during this time of sorrow and loss.

Sincerely yours,

Reverend James J. Laughlin, Pastor

Kelly Meraw, Parish Cantor

I am the Resurrection and the Life

John 11:26

The Funeral Liturgy

Introductory Rites

At the beginning of the Funeral Mass, the family gathers at the door of the church and is greeted by the Priest and other liturgical ministers. The coffin is sprinkled with holy water in remembrance of the deceased person's Baptism and first acceptance into the community of faith. Family members are encouraged to place the white pall on the coffin as a reminder of the garment given at Baptism, signifying life in Christ.

As the procession begins toward the altar, a hymn is sung. Suggestions for the processional hymn include:

Be Not Afraid (Dufford)

Here I am, Lord (Schutte)

Now Thank We All Our God (Rinkart)

Liturgy of the Word

Appropriate scriptural passages for the Readings may be found in the booklet *Through Death to Life* or on the Parish website (www.stjohnwellesley.org). A family member or friend may read the First and Second Readings, or a liturgical minister at St. John's will do so. The Cantor will lead the congregation in singing the psalm.

First Reading from the Old Testament

Responsorial Psalm

Singing the Responsorial Psalm enables our community to respond in faith to the reading(s). Appropriate psalms and settings include:

Psalm 23: My Shepherd is the Lord (Gelineau)

Psalm 23: Shepherd Me, O God (Haugen)

Psalm 25: To You, O Lord (Haugen)

Psalm 27: The Lord is My Light (Haas)

Psalm 91: On Eagles' Wings (Joncas)

Second Reading from the New Testament

Gospel

Homily

Prayers of the Faithful

These prayers may be prepared and read by a family member or friend. As each prayer is read, the community responds with the words "Lord, hear our prayer."

Liturgy of the Eucharist

As the Liturgy of the Eucharist begins, members of the family or friends may bring the gifts of bread and wine to the altar. Instrumental music or a song may accompany this procession with the gifts. Appropriate selections of music for this part of the Mass include:

Ave Maria (Schubert)
Eye Has Not Seen (Haugen)
Prayer of St. Francis (Temple)

The Cantor will lead the congregation in singing the Eucharistic prayer responses of the *Sanctus* (*Holy, Holy, Holy*), *Memorial Acclamation*, *Great Amen* and *Lamb of God*.

During the distribution of communion, a hymn or solo piece may be sung. Music choices that are suitable are those that celebrate the Eucharist. Suggestions include:

Eat This Bread (Berthier)
I Am The Bread of Life (Toolan)
One Bread, One Body (Foley)
Panis Angelicus (Franck)

Words of Remembrance

After communion, a representative of the family may offer a brief remembrance that shall maintain the dignity of the sacred ritual in which we are participating. These remarks should be limited to 3-5 minutes.

Final Commendation and Farewell

During the final prayers, the coffin will be incensed and the Song of Farewell is sung. The incense signifies respect for the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit and a sign of our prayers for the deceased rising up to God.

Procession to the Place of Committal

At the conclusion of the funeral rite, a song or instrumental piece may accompany the procession as it leaves the church. Suggestions include:

Amazing Grace (Newton)
How Great Thou Art (Hine)
Let There Be Peace on Earth (Miller, Jackson)

*May the angels lead you into paradise,
May the martyrs come to welcome you,
And take you to the new and eternal Jerusalem.*