

# St. Dominic's Catholic Church Los Angeles

## Planning Funeral & Memorial Liturgies

*A guide to help you make decisions*



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From the Pastor:

## Arranging Funerals and Memorials

The sadness of death should give way in our liturgy to the promise of resurrected life. Our celebration of a person's life should reflect our conviction that in Jesus Christ we have life beyond life.

St. Dominic's is pleased to offer its parishioners and friends the complete rites as a means of consolation for the living and grace-filled assistance for the deceased. These rites, which include a funeral Mass and the possibility of a vigil in the church or funeral home, are most properly celebrated in the parish church of the deceased, in the presence of their faith community.

All remains are treated with the same honor; and the Church takes very seriously its responsibility to offer corporal works of mercy. Funerals at St. Dominic's are limited to Catholic parishioners and to those with significant ties to the parish.

Funerals are normally held at Monday to Saturday at times depending on clergy and church availability. A vigil is normally held the afternoon or evening before, at the church or at the funeral home.

The first step to take when planning a funeral liturgy is to consult one of our Dominican Priests. This may be done by contacting the main office.

St. Dominic's Catholic Church 2002 Merton Avenue,  
Los Angeles, California 90041 (323) 254-2519

Fr. Michael Fones, O.P.

## SERVICES WE ARE ABLE TO OFFER YOU

The most common form of Catholic funeral has the following elements:

1. Vigil service with either the body or cremated remains present.
2. Funeral Mass or service with either the body or cremated remains present.
3. Graveside service with burial of the body or cremated remains.

Another option is a memorial Mass or service with no remains present. These can take place close to the time of death or at some convenient time for the gathering of friends and family.

## VIGIL SERVICE OPTIONS

1. Prayer service (suitable for congregations of mixed faiths)
2. Prayer service with rosary – see below (suitable for congregations of mixed faiths)
3. Rosary alone – usually five decades of the rosary. (suitable where most of the congregation are Catholic).

The vigil service may be held at the funeral home, the church or at a private home. This could mean that you decide to have it at the home of the deceased.

Vigils may be led by a priest or deacon. The vigil is the best time to have memorials, eulogies, as well as secular music and readings, such as poems.

### ***1. PRAYER SERVICE***

Greeting  
(Opening Song)  
Opening Prayer  
Reading from Scripture followed by a Psalm  
Gospel *and* Brief Homily  
Intercessions *and* Lord's Prayer  
Concluding Prayer

After this simple vigil is a good time for eulogies and other memorials, secular readings or poems. These may be interspersed between quiet time for people to pray before the deceased, their ashes, or their photo.

### ***2. VIGIL SERVICE WITH ROSARY***

The prayer service above (1.) followed by a rosary. The rosary may include a short reading from scripture to illustrate a decade of the rosary followed by the praying of that decade.

### ***3. ROSARY ALONE***

The rosary may include a short reading from scripture to illustrate a decade of the rosary followed by the praying of that decade.

## FUNERAL MASSES

### 1. Funeral Mass with body or cremated remains present.

The funeral Mass is held at the church. At the entrance to the church the remains are sprinkled with holy water and covered with a pall, a reminder of baptism. When the procession reaches the front of the church an open bible and a crucifix, symbols of Christian faith, may be placed on the casket.

An urn of cremated remains may be carried in procession or placed on a table at the front of the church before the service begins.

A flag may be placed on a casket after communion

### 2. Memorial Mass (no remains present)

The memorial Mass is held in church just like a funeral Mass, but no remains are present. The opening of Mass is like a more usual Mass with an Opening Song, Greeting and Penitential Act.

## OUTLINE OF A FUNERAL MASS Introductory Rites\*

At the entrance to the church the remains are sprinkled with holy water and covered with a pall, a reminder of baptism. When the procession reaches the front of the church an open bible and a crucifix, symbols of Christian faith, are placed on or near the casket or urn.

### The Liturgy of the Word

- First Reading
- Responsorial Psalm (usually sung)
- [Second Reading (optional)]
- Gospel Reading
- Homily
- Prayer of the Faithful

### Liturgy of the Eucharist

- The Offertory\* (Bread and wine are brought to the altar)
- The Eucharistic Prayer
- The Lord's Prayer and The Peace
- Communion\*

- Final Commendation and Farewell
  - The remains are sprinkled with holy water and/or honored with incense and the pall is removed.
  - The service may continue at a cemetery for interment of a casket or inurnment of cremated remains.

*\*Hymns and solos may be inserted at these points*

You may wish to think of people from your family and friends who can:

- Read the 1<sup>st</sup> reading
- Read the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading (optional)
- Read the Prayers of the Faithful
- Bring forward the gifts of bread and wine

### Readings at Mass

We encourage family members and friends to take part in the Liturgy of the Word by reading the First Reading and Second Reading (optional) and the Prayer of the Faithful. Copies of the authorized readings are included at the back of this booklet. Other readings may be included in a vigil service.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

### Tributes and eulogies

Normally individual tributes should be reserved for the vigil service the afternoon or evening before the day of the Funeral Mass or for a reception following. The homily at Mass is when the priest will preach on the gospel you have chosen and make specific references to the deceased. One short tribute may be read at Mass. This is best read from a script, and it is very helpful if a copy of this is available to the priest before the Mass.

### Displays and photographs

We welcome displays of photographs and memorabilia at the entrance to the church. A single framed portrait may be displayed on an easel near the altar.

### Financial considerations

The recommended donation for use of the church is \$200. No one will be denied the services of the Church for financial reasons; if the fees are burdensome, please speak with the priest. These donations/stipends may be paid through the funeral home or by a family member. They should be paid on or before the day of the funeral.

## Flowers

We welcome flowers and wreaths as part of the funeral celebration. During Lent we do not use flowers on the altar, but they can be displayed around the casket and near the ambo.

## Memorial Gifts

You may wish to encourage friends and family to make Memorial Gifts to St. Dominic's Church. These gifts are received in the name of the one who has died, and the immediate family is notified of these gifts. Memorial gifts may be used for the general needs of the church, or may be designated for one or more specific purposes, such as church restoration, community service, a particular ministry, or the music program. If you wish to have Memorial Gifts made to St. Dominic's Church, it will be indicated in the funeral program.

## MUSIC

Music is an important part of ritual, and we encourage families to make full use of the Church's rich tradition and the parish's musical resources.

### Music before and after the Mass

Music for all liturgies is under the direction of the Director of Music, Mr. Rudy Acosta. Organ music can provide a quiet and prayerful atmosphere at the beginning of the service, when mourners are likely to be upset and in need of a calming atmosphere. At the end of the Mass, when the cortège (procession of family and ministers) leaves the church for the final resting place, it is good to have some uplifting and reassuring music.

### Hymns, Psalms and Spiritual Songs

During a liturgy that lasts around 60 minutes, it is good to allow everyone present to participate in the singing. The hymns, psalms and spiritual songs that are chosen need to be familiar to a good number of the congregation so that the singing is strong. Our hymnal contains many fine items from which you may wish to choose. There may be material not included in our resources that you wish to use. In this case, we will need to arrange for the words to be printed. In all cases, you should talk with Mr. Acosta as soon as you are able.

### Soloists and Choirs

Many people like to have a solo sung. We recommend that one of our skilled cantors lead the singing of the Psalm and the Eucharistic music, and sing one or more of the many appropriate solos that you may choose. Our Director of Music will be pleased to advise you on this and help with choices.

Music fees are \$200 for our organist and \$150 for the cantor. These fees may be paid through the funeral home or by a family member directly to the musicians. They should be paid on or before the day of the funeral.

### Recorded Music

We recognize the importance of certain recorded songs. Recorded music may be proper at a vigil service or at a reception but not during Mass.

\*Rudy Acosta, Director of Music, St. Dominic's Catholic Church  
2002 Merton Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90041.  
(323) 258-9854

## MUSIC FOR FUNERALS AND MEMORIAL MASSES

The most commonly requested hymns and songs

Amazing Grace

I am the bread of life

On eagle's wings

O God our help in ages past

The King of love my shepherd is

Jerusalem my happy home

How lovely is your dwelling place

How great thou art

Litany of the Saints

Mine eyes have seen the coming of the glory of the Lord.

Danny Boy/Londonderry Air – we have a hymn text that fits this tune and is very suitable. Precious Lord

Be not afraid

Make me a channel of your peace (Prayer of St. Francis)

You Are Mine

Be Thou My Vision

Other hymns and songs may be requested.

## RITE OF COMMITTAL

This rite is led by a priest or deacon, and takes place at the graveside or before the niche where ashes will be placed. The simple rite is a final farewell to the deceased.

- Scripture verse and Prayer over the Place of Committal
- Committal
- Intercessions and Lord's Prayer
- Concluding Prayer
- Prayer over the People

# FUNERAL PLANNING WORKSHEET

Type of Vigil  
Vigil Prayer Service   
Vigil with Rosary   
Rosary

Date and Time of Vigil \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Vigil Service  
Home   
Mortuary: \_\_\_\_\_   
Church

Date and Time of Funeral \_\_\_\_\_

Mass  
Funeral with body   
Funeral with cremains   
Memorial Mass

Location of Mass  
Church   
Catholic Cemetery w/ chapel

Date and Time of Burial \_\_\_\_\_

Interment of body (burial)   
Inurnment of cremains (niche)

Cemetery Name/Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you wish to encourage friends and family to make Memorial Gifts to St. Dominic's Church?  
Yes  No

If yes, for General Needs  or Designated Purpose (please specify \_\_\_\_\_)

## SELECTIONS FOR THE MASS

Name of Deceased: .....

Contact Person: .....

Contact Phone number: .....

Contact email: .....

Will there be viewing of the body before the Mass? Yes  No

Opening song .....

1<sup>st</sup> reading .....

*reader's name*.....

Responsorial psalm .....Sung\_\_\_ Read \_\_\_

If read: *reader's name*.....

(2<sup>nd</sup> reading) *optional* .....

*reader's name*.....

Gospel reading .....

Prayers of the Faithful *reader's name*.....

Music at the Offertory .....

Offertory gift presenters .....

Music at communion .....

(Eulogy) *optional* .....

Music at the end of Mass .....