

ROMAN CATHOLIC FUNERAL READINGS – Ordinary Time

The selection of passages from the Bible is an important part of planning a funeral ceremony, as we want to turn to God's word for wisdom and comfort in this time of loss. The Word of God is at the heart of our Christian celebration of faith in this funeral rite in anticipation of the resurrection of the body.

To make this easier for the family, the Catholic Church has pre-selected a number of Biblical passages which are appropriate for the occasion of a funeral. Please look over these passages as part of your funeral preparations, and find those words which speak to your heart.

Instructions:

1. The first reading is taken from the Old Testament. Each reading also has an accompanying psalm, and together they form a "package deal".
2. The second reading is taken from the New Testament.
3. The gospel reading is also taken from the New Testament, and it may be chosen either by the priest or by the family. This may be discussed by the family with the priest who will preside the funeral liturgy.
4. The family is invited to designate two persons to read the first two readings, one reading each. If the psalm is to be read, not sung, then the family may pick a third person to read it. The psalm may be sung by a cantor, who may lead the congregation to sing a response.
5. The priest or an assisting deacon will proclaim the gospel.
6. Once you have selected your readings, please let the priest know the reading numbers, as well as the names of those who will be doing the readings.

CHOICES FOR THE FIRST READING

1

A reading from the book of Job

(19:1, 23-27a)

Then Job answered,
"O that my words were written down!
O that they were inscribed in a book!
O that with an iron pen and with lead
they were engraved on a rock forever!
For I know that my Redeemer lives,
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth;
and after my skin has been thus destroyed,
then in my flesh I shall see God,
whom I shall see on my side,
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm (psalm 27)

Reader: I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living.

(Response.)

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid? **(Response.)**

One thing I asked of the Lord,
that will I seek after:
to live in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the Lord,
and to inquire in his temple. **(Response.)**

Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud,
be gracious to me and answer me!
"Come," my heart says, "seek his face!"
Your face, Lord, do I seek.
Do not hide your face from me. **(Response.)**

I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living.
Wait for the Lord;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the Lord! **(Response.)**

A reading from the book of Wisdom

(3:1-9)

The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God,
and no torment will ever touch them.
In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died,
and their departure was thought to be a disaster,
and their going from us to be their destruction;
but they are at peace.
For though in the sight of others they were punished,
their hope is full of immortality.
Having been disciplined a little,
they will receive great good,
because God tested them and found them worthy of himself;
like gold in the furnace he tried them,
and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them.
In the time of their visitation they will shine forth,
and will run like sparks through the stubble.
They will govern nations and rule over peoples,
and the Lord will reign over them forever.
Those who trust in him will understand truth,
and the faithful will abide with him in love,
because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones,
and he watches over his elect.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial psalm (Psalm 116 -- an Alleluia psalm)

Reader: I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

(Response.)

Gracious is the Lord, and righteous;
our God is merciful.
The Lord protects the simple;
when I was brought low, he saved me. **(Response.)**

I kept my faith, even when I said,
"I am greatly afflicted";
I said in my consternation,
"Everyone is a liar." **(Response.)**

Precious in the sight of the Lord
is the death of his faithful ones.
O Lord, I am your servant;
You have loosed my bonds. **(Response.)**

A reading from the book of Wisdom

(4:7-15)

The righteous, though they die early, will be at rest.
For old age is not honoured for length of time,
or measured by number of years;
but understanding is grey hair for anyone,
and a blameless life is ripe old age.
There were some who pleased God and were loved by him,
and while living among sinners were taken up.
They were caught up so that evil might not change their understanding
or guile deceive their souls.
For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good,
and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
Being perfected in a short time,
they fulfilled long years;
for their souls were pleasing to the Lord,
therefore he took them quickly from the midst of wickedness.
Yet the peoples saw and did not understand,
or take such a thing to heart,
that God's grace and mercy are with his elect,
and that he watches over his holy ones.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial psalm (Psalm 23)

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

Or: If I should walk in the valley of darkness, no evil would I fear,
for you are with me.

(Response.)

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul. **(Response.)**

He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff--
they comfort me. **(Response.)**

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows. **(Response.)**

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long. **(Response.)**

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

(25:6-9)

On this mountain the Lord of hosts
will make for all peoples a feast of rich food,
a feast of well-aged wines,
of rich food filled with marrow,
of well-aged wines strained clear.
And he will destroy on this mountain
the shroud that is cast over all peoples,
the sheet that is spread over all nations;
he will swallow up death forever.
Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces,
and the disgrace of his people
he will take away from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.
It will be said on that day,
Lo, this is our God;
we have waited for him, so that he might save us.
This is the Lord for whom we have waited;
let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial psalm (Psalm 23)

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

(Response.)

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul. **(Response.)**

He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff--
they comfort me. **(Response.)**

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows. **(Response.)**

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long. **(Response.)**

A reading from the book of Lamentations

(3:17-26)

My soul is bereft of peace;
I have forgotten what happiness is;
so I say, "Gone is my glory,
and all that I had hoped for from the Lord."
The thought of my affliction and my homelessness
is wormwood and gall!
My soul continually thinks of it
and is bowed down within me.
But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope:
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
"The Lord is my portion," says my soul,
"therefore I will hope in him."
The Lord is good to those who wait for him,
to the soul that seeks him.
It is good that one should wait quietly
for the salvation of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial psalm (Psalm 25)

Reader: Those who hope in you, O Lord, shall not be disappointed.

(Response.)

Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.

According to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O Lord! **(Response.)**

Relieve the troubles of my heart,
and bring me out of my distress.
Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins. **(Response.)**

O guard my life, and deliver me;
do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge in you.
May integrity and uprightness preserve me,
for I wait for you. **(Response.)**

A reading from the book of the prophet Daniel

(12:1-3)

"At that time Michael, the great prince,
the protector of your people, shall arise.
There shall be a time of anguish,
such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence.
But at that time your people shall be delivered,
everyone who is found written in the book.
Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake,
some to everlasting life,
and some to shame and everlasting contempt.
Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky,
and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial psalm (Psalm 42)

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

(Response.)

As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God. **(Response.)**

My soul thirsts for God,
for the living God.
When shall I come and behold
the face of God? **(Response.)**

These things I remember,
as I pour out my soul:
how I went with the throng,
and led them in procession to the house of God,
with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving,
a multitude keeping festival. **(Response.)**

A reading from the second book of Maccabees

(12:43-46)

The noble Judas Maccabeus took up a collection, man by man,
to the amount of two thousand drachmas of silver,
and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering.
In doing this he acted very well and honourably,
taking account of the resurrection.
For if he were not expecting
that those who had fallen asleep would rise again,
it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead.
But if he was looking to the splendid reward
that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness,
it was a holy and pious thought.
Therefore he made atonement for the dead,
so that they might be delivered from their sin.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial psalm (Psalm 103)

Reader: The salvation of the just comes from the Lord.

(Response.)

The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger forever. **(Response.)**

As a father has compassion for his children,
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.
For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust. **(Response.)**

As for mortals, their days are like grass;
they flourish like a flower of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its place knows it no more. **(Response.)**

But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting
on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to children's children,
to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments. **(Response.)**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

(10:34-43)

Then Peter began to speak to them:

"I truly understand that God shows no partiality,
but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right
is acceptable to him.

You know the message he sent to the people of Israel,
preaching peace by Jesus Christ - he is Lord of all.

That message spread throughout Judea,
beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced:
how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power;
how he went about doing good
and healing all who were oppressed by the devil,
for God was with him.

We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem.

They put him to death by hanging him on a tree;
but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear,
not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses,
and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

He commanded us to preach to the people
and to testify that he is the one ordained by God
as judge of the living and the dead.

All the prophets testify about him
that everyone who believes in him
receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

The Word of the Lord.