

Pastoral Advantages of Planning Your Funeral Outline

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St Patrick Catholic Parish

April 18, 2023

- Welcome and Introduction (Fr Mathias)
 - a. Often family members don't know their faith or aren't practicing in order provide a dignified funeral and burial. Without a good funeral, loved ones suffer more. Beautiful funeral liturgies can facilitate people encountering God.
 - b. Purpose of funeral rites: help family grieve and offer prayers for the deceased.
 - c. Funerals are the place where people think about the reality of death, vulnerable, open to the gospel. It's important to get this correct.
 - d. Parish's goals in offering beautiful funeral rites:
 - Facilitate your families in grieving in such a way that they encounter the Lord's love in their sorrow which helps them place their faith and hope in Jesus for eternal life.
 - Pray for the repose of soul after death
 - Dispose your body in a respectful and dignified way.
 - e. Folder some materials/encourage them to take note
- Anointing of the Sick and "last rites"
 - a. Benefits of timing on Anointing of the Sick
 - Confession, pastoral care, talk to family about God, eternal life, etc
 - b. Apostolic pardon and the difference between Anointing of the Sick and "last rites"
- The role of the funeral home in caring for the family (Todd Borek)
 - a. Meeting the emotional and spiritual needs of your grieving family members
 - b. Preparing for your own funeral
- Planning a proper funeral
 - a. Timing of the funeral after death
 - 3-10 days having funeral
 - b. Funeral vigils and rosaries
 - Eulogies and open sharing
 - c. Ultimate purpose of funeral mass: praying for souls in purgatory
 - d. Parish liturgical preparation
 - Selecting Scripture readings (handouts)
 - Role of homily: Preaching the Gospel
 - Selecting music (handouts)
- Proper Christian burials and respect for the body
 - a. Strong preference of Church: burial of the body in a sacred place.
 - Dignity and holiness of the body
 - Laying body to rest in sacred ground (place to pray)

- b. In 1968 Church finally *allowed* cremation only for reasons that did not contradict Christian belief in the dignity of the body and the resurrection.¹
 - Therefore cremation is only allowed if not done for reasons against the dignity of the human person and the resurrection.
- c. Increasingly common ways of disrespecting the body
 - Keeping ashes in home, putting them in jewelry, or scattering them
 - Composting and alkaline hydrolysis
- Summary: Pastoral Advantages of Planning Funeral
 - a. Facilitate your families in grieving in such a way that they encounter the Lord's love in their sorrow which helps them place their faith and hope in Jesus for eternal life.
 - b. Pray for the repose of soul after death
 - c. Dispose your body in a respectful and dignified way
- Open Mic Q and A

¹Church's teaching is explained well in Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Instruction, *Ad resurgendum cum Christo*, "Regarding the Burial of the Deceased and the Conservation of the Ashes in the Case of Cremation," (2016) and Committee on Doctrine of the United States Catholic Bishops, "On the Proper Disposition of Bodily Remains" (2023). Another helpful article is John Grondelski, "Cremation: Recalling Some Basic Catholic Truths," in *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* (March 12, 2012), <https://www.hprweb.com/2012/03/cremation-recalling-some-basic-catholic-truths/#fn-1914-2> (accessed April 18, 2023).