

Our Lady of Lourdes Funeral Guidelines
2621 Colonial Blvd., Violet, LA 70092 * (504) 682-7070
Office Hours: M-Th 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, F 9:00 am – 2:00 pm

Introduction:

The death of a loved one can be one of the hardest moments in our lives. The Catholic Church desires to accompany you in this journey and help you to see how God is present even, and especially, in our trials and sorrows. Please know that you and your family will be in our prayers and are only a phone call away.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to help you to plan the funeral, inform you of our guidelines, and make the process as easy as possible for you and your family.

In Case of Illness or Injury:

If a loved one becomes seriously ill or is injured, please contact the Church. If you wish, we can place your loved one on the prayer list in the Parish Bulletin, pray for them, bring Communion to those who are homebound, and offer the Anointing of the Sick, as described below.

The Sacrament of the Sick:

Also known as Extreme Unction and Last Rites, the Sacrament of the Sick is not only for those who are in danger of dying in the immediate future, but for anyone who begins to be in danger of dying from sickness, injury, or old age. For example, someone who is diagnosed with cancer can be anointed as soon as they are diagnosed. Do not wait until the last minute to contact a priest. We want to be with you throughout your entire journey. Once someone has passed away, we can offer the Prayers for the Deceased, but we cannot offer Anointing of the Sick.

Upon the Death of a Loved One:

- ✠ Contact the Church Office to set a time for the funeral.
- ✠ We recommend that parishioners use the Church for the funeral, but we will also do the funeral at the Funeral Home upon request.
- ✠ You may either request a priest or deacon assigned to the parish or another, if they are available. If the funeral is at the Church, any outside priests must be approved by the Pastor.
- ✠ The priest/deacon celebrant of the funeral may offer to meet with the family to discuss the details of the funeral.
- ✠ Most of the arrangements, such as the readings, who will do the readings, and the gift bearers, will be arranged with the celebrant of the funeral.

Wake/Visitation:

- ✠ Usually from 1 to 4 hours before the funeral. This can be arranged with the Funeral Home.
- ✠ It can take place either at the Funeral Home or in the Church. We may be able to accommodate a wake the evening before the funeral, depending on the Church schedule.
- ✠ Flowers, pictures, and sentimental items may be brought to the Church for the wake or visitation.
- ✠ Food and non-alcoholic beverages are permitted in the vestibule of the Church during the wake or visitation.

Mass or Service:

For the funeral itself, you can choose to either have a full Mass, with the Eucharist, or a Funeral Service, without the Eucharist. The Funeral Mass is the ideal option, since it more fully expresses our faith in Christ and in His Cross and Resurrection, but there may be good reasons not to have the full Mass, i.e., if a large percentage of the congregation aren't Catholic. This can be discussed more fully with the priest/deacon celebrant.

- ✠ Most of the arrangements, such as the readings, who will do the readings, and the gift bearers, will be arranged with the celebrant of the funeral.
- ✠ You may have 2-3 readers, 2-3 gift bearers, 6 pall bearers, and someone to place the funeral pall, if desired, or we can handle those things for you.
- ✠ If you have altar servers in your family, they may serve for the funeral. If you wish to have an altar server, but do not know any, we may be able to ask our servers, depending on their schedules. Altar Server's vestments are available for use at the Church.
- ✠ Funerals cannot take place on Sundays.

Words of Remembrance:

The Church doesn't allow a eulogy or words of remembrance to take place during the Funeral Mass or Service itself. If someone wishes to say some words of remembrance for the deceased, they can do so during the visitation, right before the funeral starts, or at the graveside service. We don't open the floor to anyone who wants to come up, so, if there will be words of remembrance, the family must let the priest/deacon celebrant know ahead of time.

Cremation:

The Catholic Church prefers for the deceased to be buried whole, as our Lord was buried, as a sign of our faith in the resurrection of the dead. However, cremation is also allowed for Catholic funerals, especially in cases of financial need, due to the high cost of funerals. The Church does not consider cremation to be bad, but she does recognize that being buried whole is better. For cremations, there are basically 2 options:

- ✠ The body of the deceased is present for the visitation and funeral. The cremation takes place afterwards and the cremated remains are buried when the family receives the remains back from the funeral home.
- ✠ The cremation takes place immediately and the cremated remains are placed in a dignified urn. The cremated remains are present for the visitation and funeral.

Burial:

Out of reverence for the body of the deceased and because of the Catholic belief in the resurrection of the dead, the body or cremated remains of the deceased ought to be buried in a worthy place, and preferably all together. You may need to keep the ashes for a time, until the burial can be arranged, but the keeping of the ashes indefinitely should be avoided. It has been a Christian practice since the time of Christ for Christians to be buried, just as Christ was buried.

Flowers & Decorations:

- ✠ Very often, flowers are ordered specifically for the funeral by family and friends of the deceased. The flowers should not be left in the Church after the funeral.
- ✠ If you want to donate one of the arrangements to the Church just let us know beforehand.
- ✠ We have several easels of various sizes available to be used for pictures or other displays.
- ✠ If you wish to have a sign-in book or prayer cards, you can arrange for them through the funeral home.

Music:

If you wish to have musicians for the funeral, the office can arrange that for you. The musicians we use charge a fee of \$130. If you want to arrange for someone else to do the music, they must be approved through the Church office. Only Christian hymns or instrumental music will be permitted at the funeral.

Fees and Offerings:

There is no fee for a funeral at Our Lady of Lourdes Church. If you wish to give an offering to the Church, priest or deacon, or to the altar servers that is entirely up to you. Any offerings to the Church are appreciated and should be made out to Our Lady of Lourdes Church, placed in an envelope, and given to the priest or Church office.