



Handbook for
Funeral Masses
Saint Agnes Catholic Church

PLANNING THE FUNERAL MASS

Reserving the Church

Please contact the parish Office when your loved one has passed from this life to eternal life. For funeral arrangements, the easiest procedure is to meet first with the funeral director of your choice. At that time, the funeral director will contact the parish office about setting a time for the Funeral Mass, which involves coordinating the schedules of the family, the funeral home, the cemetery, and the church. St. Agnes Church will do its best to accommodate your wishes. If you would like a particular priest to celebrate the funeral liturgy, you may ask at that time.

Visiting Clergy

If you wish to have a priest from another parish in the Diocese of Arlington celebrate the Funeral Mass, the Pastor must grant permission. All diocesan priests are welcome to concelebrate, but should inform the Pastor so that proper preparations may be made.

If you wish to have a priest from another Diocese offer or concelebrate the Funeral Mass, he must have a Letter of Good Standing sent from his bishop to the Pastor of Saint Agnes and to the Bishop's Delegate for Clergy of the Diocese of Arlington at this address:

Bishop's Delegate for Clergy
Catholic Diocese of Arlington
200 N. Glebe Road, Suite 901
Arlington, VA 22203

The phone number for The Office of the Bishop's Delegate for Clergy is (703) 841-3809. Please have the visiting priest contact the Pastor to finalize all arrangements.

Music and Liturgy

To arrange for music and to discuss a program, please contact Mr. Don Cotton, Director of Music, in the Parish Office at musicdirector@saintagnes.org.

If the family has a particular reading from Sacred Scripture they have in mind for the Funeral Mass, please let the officiating Priest know. Generally, the officiating priest will select the readings which best reflect the person and the spirituality of our Catholic Faith.

The family may choose one or two family members or friends to proclaim the First and Second readings. However, the readers must be practicing Catholics and preferably with experience reading at Mass. If you wish, the parish can supply readers for Mass. Potential readers must be aware of the intense emotions at a Funeral Mass which may overcome them while reading.

Readers should practice the reading before the Funeral Mass. On the day of the funeral, readers should see the presiding Priest in the Sacristy (vesting room for clergy) about twenty minutes before Mass. He will show them the Lectionary and briefly review the protocols for entering and leaving the sanctuary during Mass. The Sacristy is located through the portal to the left of the Sanctuary, past the Holy Family Altar.

If a family member would like to offer a few brief words of remembrance after Communion or immediately before the Funeral Mass, the family should first speak with the officiating Priest. The speaker must keep the remarks to five minutes maximum, and make sure they are respectful of the deceased and sacredness of the Liturgy. No “off-color,” jokes, vulgar remarks, or slights against the Catholic Church will be tolerated. If the family desires multiple individuals to speak, then they should arrange for that to occur during the visitation, before the start of the Funeral Mass, at the graveside, or at the reception.

Fees

While there is no set “fee” for a funeral, a free-will offering to the parish, based upon one’s means, is greatly appreciated. (A customary and suggested donation is \$300.). Please make the check payable to St. Agnes Catholic Church.

An offering for the officiating priest is at the discretion of the family. Please make the check payable to the priest himself.

For music, there is a \$300 fee for the organist and a \$175 fee for the cantor. If Mr. Don Cotton serves as both organist and cantor the combined fee is \$350. Please make the check payable directly to the organist and cantor.

Flowers

Arrangements for flowers can be made with either the funeral director or by contacting Donna Owen at dfowen@aol.com or 703-522-4538.

FUNERAL MASS PLANNING FORM

Please complete this form and return it to Mr. Cotton

Name of the Deceased:

Date & Time of the Funeral Liturgy:

Date of Birth:

Date of Death:

Family Contact:

Telephone Number:

Email:

Funeral Home:

Officiating Priest:

Readings and Music

Entrance Hymn:

Offertory Hymn:

Communion Hymn:

Meditation:

Recessional Hymn: