

St. Lawrence Church  
Funeral Preparation – *Words of Remembrance of Faith*

A Mass of Christian Burial is first and foremost a celebration of Holy Mass in which we give praise and thanks to God the Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Secondly, we offer the Mass of Christian Burial to pray for the repose of the soul of the deceased. *After the Mass*, it is customary for family and friends to gather to comfort one another, share precious memories, and celebrate the life of the deceased

It is becoming more and more customary for the families to request someone to give *Words of Remembrance of Faith* at the funeral Mass. As Catholics, we do not give eulogies at the Mass at all. Bishop Matano clearly articulated the guidelines for the Diocese of Rochester which are to be followed for this option. Succinctly, regarding *Words of Remembrance of Faith*:

**-The most appropriate time for these would be at the Gathering of the Family and Friends, or at Vigil for the Deceased (commonly known as the Wake or Calling Hours) or at the cemetery if weather permits.**

**-ONE PERSON only speaks in the name of all when the Words of Remembrance of Faith are given.**

**-The *Words of Remembrance of Faith* are to be brief: no more than 3-4 minutes (one typed page) and should be within the dignity and flow of the Liturgy of the Mass and appropriate for the Church.**

**-The *Words of Remembrance of Faith* are to be prepared beforehand, and reviewed by the pastor. This is done by emailing him at [Fr.Lee.Chase@dor.org](mailto:Fr.Lee.Chase@dor.org) the document.**

**-The *Words of Remembrance of Faith* should provide a brief insight into the Christian faith and values of the deceased.**

Sometimes, stories that are thought to be funny or witty by the speaker simply turned into embarrassing and awkward moments in the church. Anecdotes, stories of a misspent youth, memories of incidences that one would want to forget should not find their way into *Words of Remembrance of Faith*. A guiding principle is this: “What do I want our guests at the Funeral Mass to remember as they leave?” Stories about intimacy, alcohol consumption, etc., swear words and innuendo have no place in *Words of Remembrance of Faith*.

We would want these words to ennoble all present and the loved one remembered.

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- Takes place at the beginning of the Mass, immediately following the procession and the priest's introduction
- Limited to one person who speaks briefly, no longer than 3 minutes (3 minutes is about 350-400 words or one double spaced typed page).
- Focused on the treasured memories of your deceased love one in a context of faith, values and spirituality of the deceased.
- The person chosen to speak at the Catholic Mass would preferably be Catholic. If not, we ask that they be familiar with and respectful of Catholic traditions, aware of the Scriptures chosen by the family, and focused on the faith of the person being remembered.
- The person offering the Words of Remembrance needs to confer with the family and next of kin about the content as well as the pastoral staff contact at St. Lawrence Church who is coordinating the funeral with the family.
- Words of Remembrance must be scripted and should be rehearsed at home, preferably with a close family member of the deceased. The person asked to speak should feel confident that they can speak without excessive emotion which could make it hard for people to understand their words.
- This Words of Remembrance are spoken from the ambo (the lectern on the left side of the altar as you are facing the altar) and approached from the left front side of the sanctuary by the handrail. You will be called by name.
- Be aware that if you are going directly to the cemetery, your arrival time at the cemetery is scheduled based on the start time of the Mass. Words of Remembrance are the most significant time variable in potentially arriving late to the cemetery which can impact your arrangements there.

#### Examples:

##### Eulogy:

My grandmother was a wonderful person who was the best cook and baker in the world. She made the best chocolate chip cookies and everyone loved her. She was born in Italy and came to America in 1925. She met Grandpa just before the war and they married when he came home. They had seven children. She loved to sew. She loved to bowl. She loved to gossip on the telephone. We're going to miss her so much.

##### Words of Remembrance of Faith

My grandmother was a good person who was filled with faith. Attending Mass every Sunday, and after she retired, every day – she was the model for all of us in living out her faith. She welcomed everyone to her table, even people she didn't know. And many times, if there were leftovers, she brought them to our neighbors who she knew didn't have enough to eat.

##### Eulogy:

Grant was a great guy who loved to throw back a few with the guys on Friday nights at The Distillery. He was one hell of a guy (oh, sorry Father). He met Lorraine at a party and knew she was the one. But he never lost his eye for good lookers, if you know what I mean.

##### Words of Remembrance of Faith

Grant worked hard to make sure his children were well taken care of and had a good home. Lorraine and he went to Church together with all the kids every Sunday. He was a quiet man who did good things for others. He was a loyal and he was kind.