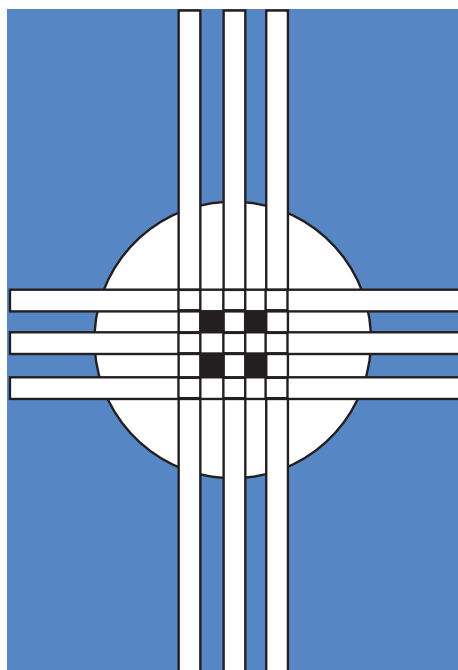


FUNERAL GUIDELINES



La Purísima Catholic Church

FUNERAL & GUIDELINES

“By means of the funeral rites it has been the practice of the Church, as a tender mother, not simply to commend the dead to God but also to raise high the hope of its children and to give witness to its own faith in the future resurrection of the baptized with Christ.”

(Decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship)

La Purisima Catholic Community wishes to minister to you, family and friends who mourn the death of a loved one. It is our desire also to pray for a peaceful repose of the soul of the deceased. “At the death of a Christian, whose life of faith was begun in the waters of baptism and strengthened at the Eucharistic table, the Church intercedes on behalf of the deceased because of its confident belief that death is not the end nor does it break the bonds forged in life. “Through its funeral rites, the Church commends the dead to God’s merciful love and pleads for the forgiveness of their sins.”

(Order of Christian Funerals nos. 4, 6.)

It is our most sincere hope that these guidelines will enable you to create a prayerful funeral and that through this experience you will be consoled by the love and compassion of our Lord.

AT THE TIME OF DEATH

A family member, or the mortuary serving the family will call the Parish office in order to begin the funeral arrangements. If you have a specific day or time that you are requesting, we will make every attempt to honor your request. However please do not give any dates to relatives and friends until we are sure that the Church and a priest are available at the time you are requesting. We will contact you within 24 hours of your initial call to confirm your request or offer you an alternative day or time.

Our Bereavement Ministry will also be notified, and one of the team members will contact you as quickly as possible. This Bereavement Minister will meet with you and your family and assist you in planning the actual funeral service. He/She will explain to you in detail the various services available to your family and help you decide the Scripture readings and songs that will best help you express your faith. The Bereavement Minister will also be at the funeral to assist you with any needs you may have.

FUNERAL SERVICE OPTIONS

THE VIGIL

The Vigil is generally held the evening before the Funeral Mass or Service. There are 2 distinct options:

PRAYER SERVICE

This service consists of prayers, scripture readings, and music if desired. If this service is held in a home, or at the mortuary, secular readings such as poems, and secular music can be used. Eulogies and personal sharing are best given at this service. This service will be officiated by a Deacon, Bereavement Minister or a priest if available.

ROSARY

This traditional Catholic devotion meditates on the mysteries of Christ’s life, and is considered by many to be the most appropriate form for a funeral vigil. However, if there are very few Catholics attending the Vigil, or if those in attendance do not regularly pray and understand the Rosary this may not be the best form of prayer for your family

The Rosary can be held in the home, mortuary or Church if it is available. A family member, Bereavement Minister or Deacon, can lead it. Eulogies and sharings are best given at this service and may be at the beginning, or end of this devotion.

FUNERAL & GUIDELINES

FUNERAL OPTIONS

FUNERAL MASS

The Funeral Mass is celebrated in La Purisima Church. Funeral Masses are celebrated during the week. They may not be celebrated on Sunday, Solemnities or during Holy Week. Saturdays are generally not available because of other parish activities. It is because our parish is a very busy community that days and times of funerals are subject to the availability of a priest, the church, and parking.

FUNERAL SERVICE OUTSIDE OF MASS

This service is a viable choice when the majority of the family or congregation is not Catholic and will not be receiving Holy Communion. If held in the Church, it consists of Music, Scripture Readings and a homily, and will be officiated by a Deacon or Priest. If held in the mortuary, secular readings and music may be used, and eulogies may be shared. A Deacon, or Priest will officiate.

GRAVESIDE SERVICE

This option is appropriate when the deceased was not a practicing Catholic, or there are no Catholic members in the family. The content of this service is entirely up to the family and maybe led by a Deacon or Bereavement Minister. We would be happy to help you design this service if needed.

THE BURIAL RITE (COMMITTAL SERVICE)

It is customary that after the Funeral Mass or Service, family and friends accompany the deceased to his/her final resting place at the cemetery. There, final prayers and blessings are offered and the body is commended to the Lord. A Priest, Deacon, or Bereavement Minister conducts this rite.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

CREMATION

According to Canon Law, "The Church earnestly recommends that the pious custom of burying the bodies of the dead be observed; it does not however, forbid cremation unless it has been chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching." The following procedures are appropriate in the event that a cremation is desired:

It is preferable that the body should be present for the Vigil and Funeral Mass/Service.

"At Baptism, the deceased was clothed with a white garment. At death, a reminder of this baptismal garment, the pall is placed on the casket. It is a sign of the Christian dignity of the person." (*Order of Christian Funerals no. 38*)

The mortuary will provide you a casket for this purpose. The cremation is to take place following the Funeral, and arrangements should be made for a time to have the Committal Service at the cemetery.

If Cremation does take place before the Funeral Rites, then the cremated remains should be present at both the Vigil and Funeral.

The Catholic Church, because it values the integrity of the whole person does not permit the scattering of ashes. They are to be either buried, or placed in a columbarium with the appropriate Committal prayers.

FLOWERS, FLAGS AND OTHER TRIBUTES

Fresh flowers if desired are welcome. One or two appropriate sprays may be placed in the Sanctuary as long as they do not obstruct the congregation's view of the Altar, Ambo, or Music Ministry. The remaining floral sprays and arrangements may be placed in the Worship Plaza, or near the Baptismal font as long as they do not impede the flow of traffic. If a floral spray adorns the casket, it will be removed prior to the Funeral Mass or Service so that the Funeral Pall may be placed on the casket. Once the Pall is removed at the end of Mass, the floral spray may be replaced.

AMERICAN FLAG

It is not permissible to drape the casket with the American Flag during Mass.

It may however be folded and placed on the pall at the feet of the deceased for the Funeral Liturgy.

CRUCIFIX OR BIBLE

During the Entrance Procession, a family member may carry a Crucifix or family Bible. This Crucifix or Bible may be placed on the casket for the Funeral.

FUNERAL & GUIDELINES

Music

The Funeral Mass, and Funeral Service when held in the Church must be accompanied by music. A Cantor and Accompanist from La Purisima will be responsible for providing this music. The Bereavement Minister will provide you with a list of appropriate songs from which to choose.

- **Musicians** who are not part of the La Purisima Church Music Ministry are discouraged because they are not familiar with La Purisima and they do not have access to the sound equipment. If a musician other than a La Purisima Staff musician is desired, this person and the song selections must be approved by the Director of Liturgy and Music. A Director Fee will be charged for the setup, monitoring and breakdown of the sound equipment.
- **Recorded Music** is strictly forbidden before, during or after any Funeral held in the Church. No exceptions. This form of musical expression is permitted at services outside of the parish church.

EULOGIES

“At the Funeral Mass or Service (in the Church) there should, as a rule, be a short homily, but *never a eulogy of any kind.*” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal #382*)

The Funeral Mass or Service from the Entrance Procession until the Final Dismissal is one grand prayer to our heavenly Father. Eulogies disrupt the continuity of this prayer and are therefore inappropriate. These tributes are perfectly appropriate at the Vigil or Graveside Service. If it is felt that a Eulogy must be given on the day of the Funeral, it may be given ½ hour before Mass begins. It may also be given after Mass and after the Priest and altar servers have left the sanctuary. If this is the chosen option, arrangements must be made with the mortuary and cemetery to allow for the delay of the burial.

VISITING PRIESTS OR DEACONS

Pending the pastor’s approval, visiting Priests and Deacons are welcome at La Purisima Church.

FEES AND STIPENDS

The Bereavement Minister will provide you with a fee schedule for all services rendered by La Purisima Church.

AFTER THE FUNERAL

“Christian consolation is rooted in that hope that comes from faith in the saving death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christian hope faces the reality of death and the anguish of grief but trusts confidently that the power of sin and death has been vanquished by the risen Lord.” (*Order of Christian Funerals no. 8*)

We at La Purisima want to support you as you face this “reality of death and anguish of grief” after the funeral. One of the ways that we promise to support you is through prayer. We will record your loved one’s name in our book of remembrance and offer a Mass for your loved one on the first anniversary of his/her death. We will also pray for your loved one during the month of November, and in a special way during Mass on All Souls Day.

GRIEF SUPPORT

Our Bereavement Ministers have been trained to be available to you during this difficult time of transition. Each family has different needs. Your Bereavement Minister will work with you to determine how you might best be helped. Whether you need a listening ear, referral to a support group or counselor, or practical advice, your Bereavement Minister will have resources available for you.



*“For the faithful,
life is changed not ended.
When the body of our earthly dwelling
lies in death,
we gain an everlasting dwelling place
in heaven.”*

(Taken from the Eucharistic Prayer of the Funeral Mass)

