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**Preparing for Funerals at**

**St. Margaret Mary**

**12686 Central Ave.**

**Chino, California 91710**

**(909)591-7400**

*Jesus told Martha, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live.” (Jn. 11:25)*

*Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself. (Phil. 3:20-21)*

***Vigils/Rosaries, Funerals, Burials***

*Our Church is anxious to accompany you in your grief. Catholic funerals, and the rites and customs connected with them, commend the dead to God and strive to confirm and strengthen our faith in Resurrection and our future reunion with heaven. They are not so much a celebration of a person’s life as acts of entreaty and faith in the God who creates and saves in Jesus.*

*A complete Catholic burial service contains three parts:*

1. ***Vigil or Rosary***

*Usually led by a deacon or lay person, these are prayers said the day before (or several days before) the funeral. When most people in attendance are Catholic, you may want a Rosary, especially if this will be familiar to those present or was a favorite prayer of the deceased. If many attending this service are non-Catholics, a Vigil (composed of prayers, psalms and scriptures) may seem preferable. The Vigil or Rosary is the appropriate time for sharing memories of the deceased, a biography, favorite music, etc.*

1. ***Funeral***

*Usually (though not always) this is a Mass with special prayers and customs. It is primarily a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the person, entreaty for forgiveness of sins and imperfections, and expression of trust in God and acceptance of God’s will. The funeral can be a time for simple sharing of memories, but this should be kept brief (never more than 7 or 8 minutes), since the focus is not on the deceased but on God, and what God offers us in Jesus.*

1. ***Burial***

*Usually this is done right after the Funeral, although some prefer to have it later on that day, or even at a later date.*

***+++ No one is obligated to all three services. Often people prefer only a funeral, or a blessing at the cemetery, of a vigil at home followed by burial, etc. Please note, though, that vigils and extra prayers are not done in connection with a funeral Mass. Mass has an integrity and fullness all by itself, and is not to have attachments.***

***PREPARATION***

1. If you are using the services of a **mortuary**, please contact them first. They will assist you in setting a time for your service here. If you are not using the service of a mortuary, you are welcome to contact us directly.
2. Once a service is scheduled, please set up a **liturgy-planning appointment** with one of the priests ( To make an appointment, call church office 909-591-7400). He will pray with you, and let you know the optional ways you may be involved in the actual service (i.e. by selecting and proclaiming the scriptures, sharing memories, leading the prayers of the faithful, bringing up the bread and wine, serving as Eucharistic Minister, etc.). You will not need to make your liturgical choices at this meeting. You will be given take-home materials, and then you can call in your decisions after you’ve had a chance to think and consult. (By the way, you are welcome to bring as many family or friends to this planning-gathering as you like.)
3. **Liturgical music** is part of any funeral Mass. We have good musicians here, but if you have someone else you’d like to invite, they should be acquainted with liturgical music and know how to use any sound equipment or instruments. You will need to let us know in advance.

(The normal stipend to funeral musicians is $150.00)

***FEES***

**For** **Parishioner**

Vigil/Rosary (if at St. Margaret Mary) - $100.00

Funeral Service - $200.00 (Includes $50 to funeral coordinator)

Cemetery burial - $50.00

**For Non-Parishioner**

Vigil/Rosary (if at St. Margaret Mary) - $150.00

Funeral Service - $250.00 (Includes $50 to funeral coordinator)

Cemetery burial - $75.00

***COMMON QUESTIONS***

1. **Does the body have to be present for the Funeral?**

Although many people find the presence of the body consoling, it is not required. Some prefer ashes. Some prefer a Memorial Mass, with no ashes or remains present. (In this case, a large picture of the deceased placed in the sanctuary may be appropriate.)

1. **May non-Catholics assist in some of the Funeral ministries?**

Yes

1. **Does the parish offer any hall-kitchen facilities for reception afterwards?**

Yes. If available, you are welcome to use one of our halls and kitchen, for free. A $100 cleaning deposit is requested, but this is returned afterwards if things are left in order.

1. Funerals these days are very expensive. **Is there a way for the church to lower some of their charges?**

Yes. A funeral is a time to thank God for the blessing of that person, and alms to the Church make sense. But in cases of financial hardship, you should not be deprived of the consolation God offers through our Church.

1. Am I expected to “tip” the musicians or priest or ministers? No. The musicians have a right to their fee, but other services are provided out of love. If you want to leave a gift, you are certainly welcome … but this is not required or expected.

*--- A final detail: Flowers left at church help beautify the sanctuary, and remind people to pray for the deceased. You are invited to consider leaving at least some flowers at church to glorify God.*