

Catholic Funeral

At a Catholic funeral the community gathers to say farewell to the person who has died and entrust that person to God's loving care.

When a Christian dies, the community gathers for a funeral. They say farewell to the person who has died and entrust that person to God's loving care. They praise and thank God for the gift of a life which has been returned to its Creator. They remember with joy and pain what that person has meant to them.

Catholic funeral rites are:

- Vigil for the Deceased – The Vigil may be quite informal, where the family and friends of the deceased person pray in the presence of the body in the home, in the Chapel of the Funeral Directors, or in the parish Church on the night before the Funeral Liturgy. The Vigil would include prayers and readings and an opportunity for a relative or friend of the deceased person to give some “words of remembrance” of the one who has died. The Vigil may be celebrated on the night before the funeral liturgy.
- Funeral Liturgy – The Funeral Liturgy is the central liturgical celebration. It is usually celebrated in the church, and may be a Mass with the final commendation, or a Liturgy of the Word followed by prayers and a final commendation. The funeral liturgy is held whenever is appropriate for family and friends to gather.
- The Rite of Committal – This is the final act of care for the deceased person. It may be held at the cemetery or in the Crematorium Chapel. This Rite may also be used for burial at sea. The rite of committal (burial or cremation) usually follows the funeral liturgy.

A Planning Aid

A workbook called [*Life is Changed Not Ended*](#) is available to help people prepare the funeral liturgy of a loved one or for someone to indicate their wishes regarding their own funeral.