

THE FUNERAL SERVICE

Words to be said are in this style: **All:** say these words.

Instructions are in italics.

The funeral of the Church may be grouped into two divisions: the first including those offices, foremost in importance, whose purpose is to surround the liberated soul with peace and spiritual power. Of these, the offering of the Holy Sacrifice for the repose of the soul is the most important and efficacious. The other and less important part of the rite consists of hallowing the ground or grave and the consigning to it of the ashes or the cast-off body. To this must be added the work of giving comfort and assurance to the relatives and friends.

This work of giving help and peace to the departed person is inevitably hindered if we surround them with feelings of depression and unhappiness. Every effort should therefore be made to put aside our own very natural sense of sorrow and loss and to think rather of the happiness and peace of the departed soul. In proportion as we can accomplish this, so we also gain comfort and strength for ourselves.

The Priest should be asked to commemorate the deceased person, as soon after the death as possible, at one of his regular Celebrations. It is strongly recommended that wherever possible the physical body of the deceased person shall be cremated, that is, disintegrated rapidly by fire rather than process of slow decay. If there is to be special Requiem Eucharist the body should if possible be taken to the church where that Eucharist is offered. After the death, it is well that the body should be sprinkled by the relatives with holy water, either blessed specially by a Priest or obtained from the holy water stoup of a neighbouring church. The coffin should similarly be sprinkled before the funeral procession leaves the house. The Absolution should be performed as soon after the death as is convenient, unless the deceased person received Absolution shortly before death (it may be repeated at the burial service). In the case of a Child of tender years the Absolution is omitted.

As burial customs vary in different countries and places, the clergy must use their discretion in re-arranging the several portions of the ceremony. Hymns may be introduced at suitable places, also addresses and readings from various sources. If the entire ceremony be found too long, those portions may be omitted to which an asterisk is prefixed. According to the arrangements made, the portion of this ceremony preceding the Burial itself will take place in the cemetery out of doors, in the cemetery or crematorium chapel, in a funeral parlour, in a private house, or in the church.

The priest will be vested with black stole over white alb/surplice/chasuble as the practicalities allow. In some circumstances a plain black cassock will suffice. The priest may either accompany the funeral procession walking ahead of the coffin, or meet it at the church, cemetery or crematorium.

The Introit

Priest: I am the Resurrection and the life, said the Lord: those that believe in Me, shall never die.

* **Priest:** Do not lay for yourselves treasures upon the earth: where moths and rust will spoil, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven: where neither moths nor rust will spoil, and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is: there will your heart be also.

* **Priest:** I know that my redeemer lives: who I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold.

* **Priest:** Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man sows, he shall also reap. For he that sows according to flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that sows according to the spirit, shall of the Spirit reap, life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well- doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we endure. So let us take this opportunity; and let us do good to all people.

Priest: The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God: and there no torment shall touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seem to die, and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace. For God created mankind to be immortal: and made in an image of His own eternity. Glory be to the Father and to the Son: and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be world without end.

All: Amen.

The Invocation

When the priest has arrived at the chancel or grave and the above sentences are finished, the priest says:

Priest: In the Name of the Father ✨and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

The Charge

The priest turns to the people and says:

Priest: My brothers and sisters, we are met together here today to celebrate the passing into a higher life of our dear brother / sister N. It is natural that we who have known and loved him/her should regret his/her departure from among us; yet on this occasion it is our duty to think not of ourselves, but of him / her.

Therefore we endeavour to lay aside our personal loss and dwell only upon his / her great and most glorious gain.

So I ask you to join with me in saying (or singing) the Te Deum (or part of the twenty third psalm)

Te Deum Laudamus

Priest: The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

All: *all say:*

1. We praise you, O God: we acknowledge you to be the Lord.
2. All the earth worships you: the Father everlasting.
3. To you all Angels sing aloud: the heavens and all the power in them.
4. To you Cherubim and Seraphim: continually cry out,
5. Holy, Holy, Holy: Lord God of Hosts.
6. Heaven and earth are full of unending majesty: of Your Glory.
7. The glorious company of the apostles: praise you.
8. The goodly fellowship of the prophets: praise you
9. The noble army of martyrs: praise you.
10. The holy Church throughout the world: acknowledges you.
11. The Father of an infinite majesty.
12. Your honourable, true and only Son.
13. Also the Holy Spirit: the Comforter.
14. You are the King of Glory: O Christ.
15. You are the everlasting Son: of the Father.
16. You are seated at the right hand of God.
17. You are the Alpha and Omega: The bright and morning Star.
18. Offspring root of David: You are first and last of all.
19. Day by day: we magnify you.
20. And we worship your Name: ever world without end.
21. You who emanates from Both: O God the Holy Spirit.
22. You, too, O Paraclete: we worship and adore.
23. You are the fount of life: the living Fire of love.
24. Three in One: most holy Lord and God.
25. Co-equal, co-eternal: before beginning and without end.
26. We your servants live in you: and all we have is yours.
27. We bless you, we magnify you: and all we have is yours.
28. O mighty, glorious Trinity: let all the people praise you. Glory be to the Father and to the Son: and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever more shall be: world without end. Amen.

Priest: The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Part of Psalm 23 may be said or sung instead of the Te Deum, if preferred.

Psalm 23

Priest: The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

All: *all say:*

1. The Lord is my Shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing.
2. He shall feed me in a green pasture: and lead me beside the waters of comfort.
3. He shall convert my soul: and bring me forward in the paths of righteousness, for His Name's sake.
4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for you are with me; Your rod and staff comfort me. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.

Priest: The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

The Absolution

During the following passages the Priest sprinkles the coffin with holy water three times on each side; then censes it three times on each side. If the body is not present, these ceremonies are omitted but the words are said nevertheless. The Absolution is omitted in the case of young children.

Priest: Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord.

All: And let light perpetual shine upon him/her.

Priest: Come now to meet him/her, you Angels of the Lord.

All: Receive him/her into your fellowship, O saints of God.

Priest: May the choirs of Angels receive him/her.

All: And guide him/her into eternal peace.

Priest: Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord.

All: And let light perpetual shine upon him/her.

Priest: O God, in whose unspeakable love the soul of the departed find rest and peace, in Your Name we ✠ absolve from every bond of sin this your servant who has cast off their garment of flesh. May your Holy Angels bear him in their tender care, that he may enter the brightness of the everlasting light and find his peace in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Collects

The following collects are recited, unless the Requiem Eucharist begins and then the Collects will be said in the usual place. In the case of children, the words 'this your child' are used instead of 'this your servant'.

Priest: The Lord be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us pray.

Priest: Almighty God, who has dominion over both the living and the dead who holds all creation in the everlasting arms of your love, we pray for the peace and repose of this your servant, that he/she, being dead unto this world, yet ever living with you, may find continued and unceasing service in the perfect consummation of happiness and peace; through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Priest: Likewise, O Lord, we pray for those who love your servant, those whom you have called to sacrifice the solace of his earthly presence; O Lord, comfort them with the balm of your loving-kindness, that, strengthened by you and resting upon the surety of your wisdom, they put aside their thoughts of grief and pour out upon him only such thoughts of love as may help him/her in the higher life to which you have now called him; through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Epistle, Gospel and Communion from Requiem Eucharist may follow here if desired.

The Burial or Cremation

The procession bearing the coffin or casket goes to the grave. Before the coffin is lowered the grave or ground is sprinkled with holy water and censed. In the case of cremation, the urn or casket containing ashes is sometimes buried in a grave, sometimes deposited in a niche, and sometimes the ashes are scattered on the ground. In every case at the cremation service instead of the words 'commit this his/her cast-off body to be consumed by fire', and at the dispersal of the ashes shall be said either 'commit his/her ashes to the ground, earth to earth, dust to dust', or commit his ashes to their resting place', with any of the prayers in or following the Committal.

The following prayer is said by the Priest:

Priest: O God, who in your providence has appointed a wondrous ministry of Angels, we pray that you will ✠ hallow this grave (or ground) and send down your Holy Angel from heaven to ✠ bless and sanctify it; through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Committal (or Dispersal of Ashes)

Where the cremation has taken place and the ashes are to be dispersed on a separate occasion, the Dispersal Service starts here:

(for Dispersal Service only:

Priest: The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord).

Priest: For as much as it has pleased Almighty God of His great love to take unto Himself our dear brother/sister here departed, we therefore commit his/her cast-off body to be consumed by fire (or to the ground), [earth to earth (*here some earth is cast upon the coffin by the Priest or someone standing by*)] ashes to ashes, dust to dust that in that more glorious spiritual body which he/she now wears, he/she may be free from earthly chains to serve God as the Lord intended. For I say to you: Blessed are the dead souls which die in the Lord; for the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and where no torment shall touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seem to die, and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us utter destruction: but they are in peace. For God created mankind to be immortal, and made to be an image of His own eternity. The Lord is seated above the water floods; the Lord remains King forever. The universe is His temple; wisdom strength and beauty surround His throne as pillars of His works; for His wisdom is infinite,

Priest: His strength is omnipotent and His beauty shines through the whole universe in order and symmetry. He has stretched the heavens above as a canopy; He has planted the earth as His footstool; He crowns His temple with stars as with a diadem and from His hands flow all power and glory. The sun and the moon are messengers of His will, and all His law is concord. If we ascend up to heaven, He is there. If we go down to hell, He is there too. If we take the wings of the morning and dwell in the furthest parts of the sea, even there His hand shall lead us, and His right hand shall hold us. In His almighty care we rest in perfect peace, and in equality His care rests this our loved one, whom He has brought nearer to the vision of His eternal beauty. Therefore, ever praising Him in firm but humble confidence we call upon His Name and say:

Priest: O Father of light, in you there is no darkness at all, we pray you will fill our hearts with calm and peace, and to open within us the eyes of the soul, that we may see by faith the radiance and the glory that you pour upon us as your servants. For you gives us far more than we can ask or want, and it is only through our feebleness and faithlessness that we ever need crave anything from your omnipotence. But you know well the weakness of the human heart, and in your limitless love make allowances for our human love when we pray; grant eternal rest to this our dear brother and that light perpetual may shine upon him.

Priest: We thank you that in your loving providence you have drawn him/her from the unreal towards the Real, from darkness of the earth into your glorious light, through the gates of death into splendour beyond our comprehension. Our loving thought shall follow and surround him; O take this our gift of thought, imperfect though it is, and touch it with the eternal Fire of your love, so that it may become for him a guardian Angel to help him on his upward way. And through your lovingkindness may we in deep humility and reverence become fellow-workers with your boundless power, and may our weakness be supported by your infinite strength; so that we, with this our dearly-loved brother, may in due time attain the wisdom of the spirit, who with the Father and the Son lives and reigns, God throughout all ages of ages.

All: Amen.

The following prayer may be added:

Priest: Almighty God, in whose light the souls of the departed live in the Lord, and with you the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity; we give you hearty thanks, for that it has pleased you to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this mortal world, and pray that we may be found worthy, together with all those that are departed in the true faith of your Holy Name, to stand before your throne hereafter in the ranks of the glorious church triumphant; through Christ our Lord.
All: Amen.

Priest: ✠ May the souls of all the departed through the love of God rest in peace. Amen.
Priest: ✠ The grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.
All: Amen.

Special Form for Exceptional Cases

In the case of suicides or those who have died in the act of committing any serious crime, it will be necessary at the discretion of the officiant to make some alterations in the wording of the Charge and the Committal in this rite and certain omissions. The Change to the opening words shall be, 'Brothers and sisters, we are met together here to-day to minister to the passing into another life of our Brother N. It is natural that they who have known, etc.' The Absolution and preceding sentences shall be omitted. In the second Collect the words 'those whom you have called to sacrifice the solace of his earthly presence' shall be omitted.

The Committal Prayer shall instead read:

Priest: O Father of light, in you is no darkness at all, we pray that you will fill our hearts with calm and peace and to open within us the eyes of the soul, that we may see by faith the radiance and the glory that you are pouring upon us as your servants. Our brother's (sister's) cast-off body we commit to be consumed by fire (or to the ground), earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, that in the spiritual body he may be free from earthly chains to serve God as the Lord intended. We pray for the peace and repose of your servant that he may become a fellow worker with your boundless power, that his weakness may be supported by your infinite strength and in due course he may attain the wisdom of the Spirit, who with the Father and the Son lives and reigns, God throughout all ages of ages.
All: Amen.

Instead of the prayer immediately after the Committal the following Collect and ascription may be said:

Priest: O Eternal Lord God, who holds all souls in life, we pray that you will pour upon the whole Church the bright beams of your light and heavenly comfort; and grant that we,

together with all who have served you here and have now passed over, we all may enter into your unending joy; through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Priest: Now to the eternal, immortal, invisible, only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

At a Requiem Eucharist the usual form of Postcommunio shall be followed.

Please remember this service and the person buried or cremated today in your prayers. Please make time to visit their grave or memorial in the months and years to come.