

## VIGIL SERVICE (WAKE)

Many people find the vigil service to be a great consolation, a time for friends and family alike to support one another. On the eve of the funeral, we gather to pray for the deceased, as well as for one another, as we continue our life journey.

**Place:** Over the years, the mortuary became the “assumed” setting for a vigil service, but another option should also be mentioned - that of the parish church itself.

Because of the easy accessibility of the worship space and the closeness to all fellow parishioners who might attend, some families have chosen to celebrate the vigil service in St. James Church (of course, this depends upon the availability of the church and numbers attending).

**Time:** Our only suggestion is one of practicality: Consider beginning the service between 7:00 and 8:00 p.m. Anything earlier tends to rush people from work and dinner, anything later may exclude some folks who don’t wish to travel after dark.

**The Vigil Service:** The Church teaches us that the Vigil for the Deceased is the *principal* rite celebrated by the Christian community in the time following death and before the funeral liturgy.

The Vigil consists of prayers, Scripture readings, psalms and remembrances of the deceased. The Pastoral Team of St. James can assist the family in planning such a service.

It is a time for sharing memories, special poems and eulogies. It can be a very important time to grieve, to remember, to laugh and to cry.

By contrast, the homily at the funeral Mass is a reflection on the Scriptures you have chosen, emphasizing the redeeming love of Christ and his consolation.

**Prayers:** Many people wish to continue the tradition of praying the rosary together. Through the repetition of set prayers, a certain peace can descend upon a group of people. If the rosary is used, the Glorious Mysteries, based on the post-resurrection events of the early Christian community, are the suggested meditation.

**Presider:** The Vigil Service can be led by a priest, deacon, or other pastoral minister.

## THE FUNERAL MASS

The funeral Mass gives all Catholics an opportunity to celebrate the life / death / eternal life of your loved one in his or her “home setting” (St. James Church), gathered around the “family table” (the altar). It can be a time of great comfort, touching at the heart of our Catholic faith.

**Symbols:** The family of the deceased may participate in placing appropriate symbols on the casket at the beginning of the liturgy.

These include the white pall (the cloth placed on the casket as a symbol of our baptismal entrance into the Body of Christ). Other symbols may include a family bible, cross, etc.

**Sitting/Kneeling/Standing:** Just a word regarding sitting, standing, or kneeling; the priest-celebrant will direct such movements, being especially sensitive to those who belong to other denominations.

**Liturgy of the Word:** “Everything written before our time was written for our instruction that we might derive hope from the lessons of patience and the words of encouragement in the scriptures.” (Romans 15:4)

If the deceased had a favorite Scripture passage, or if you have one that particularly speaks of his or her faith, make this known to the minister who is assisting you with planning the funeral. Included in this pamphlet are some readings that you may want to look at, but these are by no means the only suggested Scripture passages.

Also, if a family member or friend who is a trained and mandated lector would like to proclaim the Word of God, please let a member of the Pastoral Team know.

### **Possible Readings/Psalms:**

#### **First Readings:**

**-Wisdom 3:1-6, 9** “The souls of the just are in the hand of God ...”

**-Wisdom 4:7-15** “The just person, though he die early, shall be at rest ...”

**-Daniel 12:1-3** “... but the wise shall shine brightly like the splendor of the firmament.”

**-Ecclesiastes 3:1-15** “... there is a time for everything.”

#### **Psalms:**

**Psalms 23:** Shepherd Me, O God.....#31

**Psalms 62:** In God Alone.....#69

**Psalms 63:** Your Love is Finer Than Life.....#62

**Psalms 103:** The Lord is Kind and Merciful.....  
.....#99 or #100

#### **Second Readings:**

**-Romans 6:3-4, 8-9** “If we have been united with him through likeness to his death, so shall we be through a like resurrection.”

**-Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12** “None of us lives as his own master, and none of us dies as his own master ...”

**-1 Corinthians 15:20-23** “... in Christ, all will come to life again.”

**-2 Corinthians 5:1-6-10** “We know that when the earthly tent in which we dwell is destroyed, we have a dwelling provided for us by God ...”

**-1 John 3:1-2** “See what love the Father has bestowed on us in letting us be called children of God ...”

**-Revelations 21:1-5a, 6b-7** “See, I make all things new!”

#### **Gospels:**

**-Matthew 5:1-12** “... and he began to teach them... ‘Blest too are the sorrowing, they shall be consoled.’”

**-John 6:27-40** “Jesus said to the crowd, ‘All that the Father gives me shall come to me.’”

**-John 11:17-27** “Jesus told her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life.’”

**-John 12:23-26** “...Unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat.”

**-John 14:1-6** “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

#### **Liturgy of the Eucharist:**

Family members might wish to bring forward the gifts for the Eucharist. This can be a moment to include grandchildren (above the age of 10), friends, or other family members.

In addition to the bread and wine, a particular item or photo that was dear to the deceased could be brought forward.

**Music:** Both sung and instrumental music can touch people in ways nothing else can!

Our parish will gladly assist you in planning and providing music for the funeral. If, however, a relative or friend would like to be part of the music ministry for the funeral, please encourage them to do so. They will need to contact Sr. Donna McGargill, the parish liturgy coordinator, at 402-572-0499 to make arrangements.

Since the congregation always plays a vital part in the Mass, they will be invited to share in the singing. The Responsorial Psalm and the Acclamations (“Holy, Holy, Holy,” “Amen,” etc.) are always sung by everyone.

Below please find a list of music appropriate to funeral liturgies. This list can be used as a guide in selecting music for your loved one’s funeral.

- Alleluia! Sing to Jesus! .....#826
- Amazing Grace .....#586
- Ave Maria.....#774
- Be Not Afraid.....#596
- Behold the Lamb .....#824
- Center of My Life .....#580
- Dwelling Place .....#582
- Eye Has Not Seen .....#616
- For All The Saints .....#791
- Hail Mary, Gentle Woman.....#779
- Hosea .....#405
- How Can I Keep From Singing.....#598
- How Great Thou Art.....#496
- I Am the Bread of Life.....#822
- I Know My Redeemer Lives.....#866
- Lead Me, Guide Me .....#555
- Make Me a Channel of Your Peace.....#721
- On Eagle’s Wings .....#593
- Only In God .....#591

- Shelter Me, O God.....#634
- The Hand of God Shall Hold You.....#862
- The Living Bread of God.....#841
- With A Shepherd’s Care.....#628
- Without Seeing You.....#842
- You Are All I Want.....#625
- You Are Mine.....#627
- You Are Near.....#590

**Incense:**

As a symbol of our prayers rising to God, incense is generally used at the funeral liturgy. Since “special people and special things” are revered, the body of the deceased will be incensed.

**FUNERAL LUNCHEON**

At the conclusion of the cemetery service, most people find they need some time to visit with one another in a more relaxed atmosphere.

The St. James Christian Women provide a luncheon for the family and friends of registered members. (There is a minimal charge per person for the food.)

The parish staff will contact a representative of the Christian Women, who will in turn call to visit with you. Our Parish Center provides a congenial atmosphere for the funeral luncheon.

**STIPENDS**

A monetary offering is a difficult thing to discuss. Your funeral director usually handles the stipends.

An offering of \$200 is usual to provide some compensation for church expenses and altar servers, while a stipend of \$100.00 is suggested per musician.

*In summary, we hope to be of caring service to you in your time of grief. If you have any questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to call on us. Below are the parish address and telephone number.*

NOTES:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

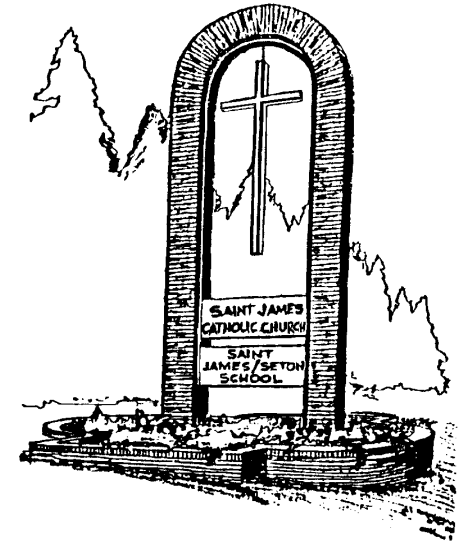
---

---

---

St. James Catholic Church  
 9025 Larimore Avenue  
 Omaha, NE 68134-2797  
 Rectory/Offices: 402-572-0499  
 © February 6, 2008  
 Updated March 2011

# St. James Catholic Church



**Blessed too are the sorrowing, for they shall be consoled.” (Matt: 5:4)**

Death is an experience we all must face, and the death of one whom we have loved is naturally a cause of grief and sorrow. After all, we will miss this person!

On behalf of the parish family of St. James, we want you to know we are at your service. This moment can be an opportunity to renew and deepen our faith in God - a chance to express our hope in God’s promises of eternal life.

This brochure is filled with suggestions for your consideration regarding funeral planning. We offer them only as a tool, a way to help you plan. Thank you for letting us share in your time of loss.