

PREPARING THE CELEBRATION
OF A
MASS OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL



*I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.
WHOEVER BELIEVES IN ME WILL NEVER DIE.
JOHN 11:25*

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CHURCH
2 WILLOW AVENUE
BALTIMORE, MD 21206

Introduction

The staff and parish family of St. Michael the Archangel Church extends our deepest sympathy on the loss of your loved one. At this difficult time, we turn to our loving God for comfort and strength. As we prepare for the Mass of Christian Burial, we offer some suggestions for your consideration.

Ministerial Roles

Family members or friends are welcome to minister in the following ways:

- Assisting with placing the Pall on the casket, as a reminder of the white Baptismal garment
- Proclaiming the First and Second readings
- Reading the General Intercessions (Prayer of the Faithful)
- Bringing the bread and wine forward at Preparation (offertory) time
- Assisting with the distribution of Communion, if he /she is a Eucharistic Minister
- Assisting as an Altar server, if so trained
- Music Ministry

You may consult relatives and friends as they visit with you, and then discuss these options with the priest or deacon. You may also contact the parish Director of Liturgy and Music regarding these choices and the music selection.

Scriptures

The words of scripture can be particularly comforting at this time. This booklet contains a selection of readings which may be proclaimed at the funeral liturgy. You may select an Old Testament and a New Testament passage. The Responsorial Psalm will be sung, and will be considered in the Music section of this booklet. The priest or deacon will proclaim the Gospel.

FIRST READING

(select one from #1-8)

#1

2 Maccabees 12: 43-46

Judas, the ruler of Israel, then took up a collection among all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice. In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin.

#2

Job 19:1, 23—27a

Job answered Bildad the Shuhite and said: Oh, would that my words were written down! Would that they were inscribed in a record; That with an iron chisel and with lead they were cut in the rock forever! But as for me, I know that my Vindicator lives, and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust; Whom I myself shall see; my own eyes, not another's, shall behold him. And from my flesh I shall see God; my inmost being is consumed with longing.

#3

Wisdom 3: 1-9 (long form)

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace. For if before men, indeed, they be punished, yet their hope full of immortality; Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself. In the time of their visitation they shall shine and shall dart about as sparks through stubble; They shall judge nations and rule over peoples, and the LORD shall be their King forever. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with the elect.

#4

Wisdom 3:1-6,9 (short form)

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace.

For if before men, indeed, they be punished, yet their hope full of immortality; Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with the elect.

#5

Wisdom 4: 7-15

The just man, though he die early, shall be at rest.

For the age that is honorable comes not with the passing of time, nor can it be measured in terms of years.

Rather, understanding is the hoary crown for men, and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age. He who pleased God was loved; he who lived among sinners was transported – Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind or deceit beguile his soul; For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind. Having become perfect in a short while, he reached the fullness of long career; for his soul was pleasing to the LORD, therefore he sped him out of the midst of wickedness, But the people saw and did not understand nor did they take this into account.

#6

Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9

On the mountain the LORD of hosts will provide for all peoples. On this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, The web that is woven over all nations; he will destroy death forever. The Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from all faces; The reproach of his people he will remove from the whole earth; for the LORD has spoken. On that day it will be said: “Behold our God, to

whom we looked to save us! This is the LORD for whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!”

#7

Lamentations 3:17-26

My soul is deprived of peace, I have forgotten what happened is; I tell myself my future is lost, all that I hoped for from the LORD. The thought of my homeless poverty is wormwood and gall. Remembering it over and over leaves my soul downcast within me. But I will call this to mind, as my reason to have hope: The favors of the LORD are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent; They are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness. My portion is the LORD, says my soul; therefore will I hope in him. Good is the LORD to one who waits for him, to the soul that seeks him; It is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the LORD.

#8

Daniel 12:1-3

In those days, I Daniel, mourned and heard this word of the Lord: “At that time there shall arise Michael, the great prince, guardian of your people; It shall be a time unsurpassed in distress since nations began until that time. At that time your people shall escape, everyone who is found written in the book. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some shall live forever, others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace. But the wise shall shine brightly like the splendor of the firmament, And those who lead the many to justice shall be like the stars forever.

During the Easter Season (the fifty days between Easter Sunday and Pentecost), we have these additional options for the First Reading:

#9

Acts 10:34-43

(Easter Time)

Peter proceeded to speak and said, “In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him. You know the word that he sent to the Israelites as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible, not to all people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

#10

Acts 10:34-36, 42-43

(Easter Time, short form)

Peter proceeded to speak and said, “In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him.

You know the word that he sent to the Israelites as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

#11

Revelation 14:13 (Easter Time)

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.” “Yes,” said the Spirit, “Let them find rest from their labors, for their works accompany them.”

#12

Revelation 20: 11-21:1 (Easter Time)

I, John, saw a large white throne and the one who was sitting on it. The earth and the sky fled from his presence and there was no place for them. I saw the dead, the great and the lowly, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. Then another scroll was opened, the book of life. The dead were judged according to their deeds, by what was written in the scrolls. The sea gave its dead; then Death and Hades gave up their dead. All the dead were judged according to their deeds.

Then Death and Hades were thrown into the pool of fire. This pool of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the pool of fire. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

#13

Revelation 21:1–5a, 6b -7 (Easter Time)

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, God’s dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God. He

will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away.” The one who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give a gift from the spring of life-giving water. The victor will inherit these gifts, and I shall be his God, and he will be my son.”

SECOND READING
(select one from #14 - 27)

#14

Romans 5: 5-11

Brothers and Sisters: Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. For Christ, while we were still helpless, yet died at the appointed time for the ungodly. Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. How much more then, since we are now justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath. Indeed, if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, once reconciled, will we be saved by his life. Not only that, but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

#15

Romans 5: 17-21

Brother and Sisters: If, by the transgression of one person, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come

to reign in life through the one person Jesus Christ. In conclusion, just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so through one righteous act acquittal and life came to all. For just as through the disobedience of one person the many were made sinners, so through the disobedience of one the many will be made righteous. The law entered in so that transgression might increase but, where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through justification for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#16

Romans 6: 3–9

Brothers and Sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into his death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection. We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin. For a dead person has been absolved from sin. If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

#17

Romans 6:3–4, 8–9 *(short form)*

Brothers and Sisters: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we to might live in newness of life. If, then, we have died with Christ, we

believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

#18

Romans 8:14–23

Brothers and Sisters: Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, “Abba, Father!” The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

#19

Romans 8: 31b - 35, 37-39

Brothers and Sisters: If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God’s chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who

indeed intercedes for us. What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?

No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor heights, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

#20

Romans 14: 7–9, 10c–12

Brothers and Sisters: None of us lives for oneself, and on one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. So then, whether we love or die, we are the Lord's. For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. Why then do you judge your brother? Or you, why do you look down on your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written: "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then each of us shall give an account of himself to God.

#21

1 Corinthians 15: 20–28

Brothers and Sisters: Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead came also through a human being. For just as in Adam all die, so too Christ shall be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the first fruit; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, when he has destroyed every sovereignty and every authority and power.

For he must reign until he has put his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death, for “he subjected everything under his feet.” But when it says that everything has been subjected, it is clear that it excludes the one who subjected everything to him. When everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will (also) be subjected to the one who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.

#22

1 Corinthians 5:1, 6–10

Brothers and Sisters: We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven. So we are always courageous, although we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yet we are courageous, and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord.

Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive recompense according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

#23

Philippians 3:20–21

Brothers and Sisters: Our citizenship is 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 power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.

#24

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep. Indeed, we tell you this, on the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will surely not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself, with a word of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus, we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, console one another with these words.

#25

1 John 3: 1–2

Beloved: See that love the father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

#26

1 John 3: 14–16

We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers. Whoever does not love remains in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him. The way we came to know love was that we laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

2 Timothy 2:8 1-2

Beloved: Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David: such is my gospel for which I am suffering, even to the point of chains, like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they too many obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory. This saying is trustworthy: if we have died with him we shall also live with him; if we persevere we shall also reign with him. But if we deny him he will deny us. If we are unfaithful he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself.

MUSIC

The parish provides an Organist and a Cantor for the funeral. You may choose only from the list of hymns given:

442 Sing With All The Saints In Glory

Sing with all the saints in glory, sing the resurrection song!
Death and sorrow, earth's dark story,
to the former days belong.

454 I Know That My Redeemer Lives

I know that my Redeemer lives.
What joy the blest assurance gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead.
He lives, my ever-living Head.

459 The Strife Is O'er

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! The strife is o'er, the battle done,
The victory of life is won;
The song of triumph has begun. Alleluia

483 Holy Holy Holy

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and might,
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!

489 Crown Him With Many Crowns

Crown Him with many crowns, the Lamb upon His throne.
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own.

496 How Great Thou Art

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee:
How great thou art! How great thou art!

513 I Want To Walk As A Child Of The Light

I want to walk as a child of the light;
I want to follow Jesus.
God set the stars to give light to the world;
The star of my life is Jesus.

523 All Creatures Of Our God And King

All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voice and with us sing: Alleluia! Alleluia!

586 Amazing Grace

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.

588 O God Our Help in Ages Past

O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home.

593 On Eagles Wings

And He will raise you up on eagles' wings,
Bear you on the breath of dawn,
Make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of His hand

596 Be Not Afraid

Be not afraid, I go before you always,
Come, follow me, and I will give you rest

622 I Heard The Voice Of Jesus

I heard the voice of Jesus say, "Come unto me and rest;
Lay down, O weary one, lay down
Your head upon my breast."

627 You Are Mine

I will come to you in the silence,
I will lift you from all your fear,
You will hear My voice, I claim you as My choice.
Be still, and know I am here

631 The King Of Love My Shepherd Is

The King of love my shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never.
I nothing lack if I am his, and he is mine forever.

671 Here I Am, Lord

Here I am Lord, Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night.
I will go Lord, if You lead me.
I will hold Your people in my heart.

761 Shall We Gather at the River

Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, beautiful
River...

764 Jerusalem My Happy Home

Jerusalem, my happy home, When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys when shall I see?

779 Hail Mary Gentle Woman

Gentle woman, quiet light,
Morning star so strong and bright.
Gentle mother, peaceful dove,
Teach us wisdom, teach us love

791 For All The Saints

For all the saints, who from their labors rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blessed.
Alleluia, Alleluia!

816 You Satisfy The Hungry Heart

You satisfy the hungry heart With gift of finest wheat;
Come give to us, O saving Lord, The bread of life to eat.

822 I Am The Bread Of Life

And I will raise him up, And I will raise him up,
And I will raise him up on the last day.

826 Alleluia Sing To Jesus

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus! His the scepter, his the throne;
Alleluia! His the triumph, his the victory alone.

862 The Hand Of God Shall Hold You

The hand of God shall hold you,
The peace of God enfold you,
The love that dreamed and formed you
Still surrounds you here today

You may choose one of the following Psalms to be sung:

- #23: My Shepherd is the Lord
- #26: To You, O Lord, I Lift My Soul
- #29: The Lord Is My Light and My Salvation
- #59: The Lord Is Kind and Merciful
- #63: Our Blessing Cup
- #68: Let Us Go Rejoice to the House of the Lord
- #942: Like a Deer that Longs for Running Streams,

There are 5 parts of the liturgy where you may choose a hymn:

1. Entrance Hymn
2. Psalm (normally psalm 23)
3. Offertory Hymn
4. Communion Hymn
5. Recessional Hymn

You may also request a solo or an additional hymn be sung at the preparation of the altar and gifts, perhaps “Panis Angelicus” to be sung at Communion.

Remember that the music used during a Mass of Christian Burial reflects the sacred nature of our worship, which is living and active. We do not play pre-recorded music, nor do we use secular songs. If you wish to include your loved one’s favorite song in some way, we recommend using it at the conclusion of the Vigil Service at the funeral home, or at a family gathering after the liturgy and burial. ***Please note that only songs from the above list may be used for the liturgy.***

SPEAKERS

Certainly, there will be many stories told and memories shared over the next few days. During the Mass of Christian Burial, the homily is based on readings selected. The homilist may well incorporate stories recounted by the family as examples of ways in which the deceased exemplified Gospel values in his or her life. If a celebrant allows a speaker during the Mass itself, we ask that you respect the Archdiocesan police:

“one speaker, a member or friend of the family may speak for **not more than five (5) minutes.**” (*Archdiocese of Baltimore Policy on Catholic Church Funeral Rites, 12-C 1/13/2000.*)

It is imperative that the “5 minute” rule be followed as closely as possible due to the many different schedules that converge to allow a funeral Mass to take place. We must be considerate of everyone’s time and schedule.

CONCLUSION

During the autumn, you will receive an invitation to attend a Memorial Mass at Michael’s around November 2, the feast of All Souls. The names of all who passed away since the previous November will be read. We encourage you to attend this beautiful liturgy as we remember those who have gone before us in faith.

We will continue to remember your family and friends in our prayers during the coming weeks and months. If you would like more information or if you have any questions pertaining to the funeral, please feel free to call the Parish Office at (410) 665-1054.

Mass of Christian Burial
St. Michael the Archangel Church, Overlea
410 665-1054

Name of the Deceased: _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Date of Funeral _____ Celebrant _____

Placement of the Pall:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

Gift Bearers: _____

Speaker: _____

*(Please observe the Archdiocesan Policy of one Speaker, **no longer than five minutes.** Additional speakers or more lengthy reflections would be more appropriate at the conclusion of the Vigil Service at the Funeral Home.)*

READINGS

(You may select one reading from either of the two groups:)

First Reading: (select from #1-8*) _____

**During the Easter Season you may choose #1-13 for the First Reading.*

Reader: _____

Second Reading: (select from #14-27) _____

Reader: _____

NOTES: