

§1400 ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

§1401. RITUAL BOOKS APPROVED FOR USE WITH CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

Commentary.

With the approval of the revised ritual book, Order of Christian Funerals and its mandatory use in the Dioceses of the United States of America from 2 November 1989, the earlier English edition, Rite of Funerals (1970), may no longer be used.

§1401.1. Policy. English Edition of the *Order of Christian Funerals*. The English translation of the *Order of Christian Funerals*, 1989 edition, approved for use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, shall be used with the rites of Christian funerals when English is used.

§1401.2. Policy. English Edition of the *Appendix Cremation*. The English translation of the *Appendix Cremation with Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites by the Committee on the Liturgy*, 1997 edition, approved for use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, shall be used with the rites of Christian funerals when English is used.

Commentary.

Ritual books printed after the Appendix Cremation was issued in 1997 contain the entire appendix and do not need the insert.

§1401.3. Policy. Spanish Edition of the *Ritual de Exequias Christianas*. The Spanish translation of the *Ritual de Exequias Christianas*, 2001 edition, approved for use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, shall be used with the rites of Christian funerals when Spanish is used.

Procedures

1. Pastoral ministers may make use of both vernacular translations when bilingual celebrations occur, making suitable adaptations as needed for good celebration.
2. Since there is no Spanish language *Appendix Cremation* for use in the Dioceses of the United States of America, pastoral ministers will make suitable ritual adaptations.
3. When rites of the Christian funerals require the use of an additional language, an approved ritual book by another conference is used.
4. Note the bilingual edition *Order of Christian Funerals / Ritual de Exequias Cristianas* by Liturgical Press (2002) only contains:
Part I: Funeral Rites [for adults]
 Vigil for the Deceased
 Funeral Liturgy
 Rite of Committal

Texts from Sacred Scripture [equals Part III but replaced by the revised translations of the *Lectionary for Mass*, second typical edition], Additional Texts [equals Part IV]

§1402. THE THREE STATIONS OR GROUPS OF RITES FOR CHRISTIAN FUNERALS

Commentary.

The General Introduction for the Order of Christian Funerals and all the other pastoral notes throughout the ritual book provide a rich theology, guides for ministerial duties, and recommendations on pastoral care for the dead and those who mourn them.

“Funeral rites” is used to refer to all of the rites detailed below as well as the additional related prayers that often are less public: prayers after death, gathering in the presence of the body, and transfer of the body to the church or place of committal.

“Funeral Liturgy” applies more specifically to the second station, the Funeral Mass or to the Funeral Liturgy outside Mass.

§1402.1. Policy. Vigil and Related Rites and Prayers. The ministers of the local parish shall accompany those who mourn the one who died with pastoral care and constant prayer from the Catholic tradition.

Procedures

1. The rosary and other forms of devotional prayer should not replace the Vigil for the Deceased (the principal rite of the Christian community following death until the funeral) and Related Rites and Prayers in the *Order of Christian Funerals* or used within them. These devotions may be used as additional opportunities for prayer, especially if there is an extended time between death and burial.
2. When neither a Priest or a Deacon is available for the Vigil for the Deceased or any of the Related Rites and Prayers, a layperson may lead them [OCF, no. 14].

§1402.2. Policy. Funeral Liturgy in the Parish Church. The Funeral Liturgy shall be celebrated in the parish church of the one who died unless arrangements are made to celebrate it in another Catholic parish church or chapel.

§1402.3. Policy. Funeral Liturgy Mass. Mass shall be the preferred funeral liturgy for one of the members of the Church who dies, when permitted by law

Commentary. See *Order of Christian Funerals*, nos. 128 and 154.

Procedures

1. “The funeral Mass is ordinarily celebrated in the parish church” [OCF, no. 155].
 - a. Particular law established by Bishop George Lucas forbids the Funeral Mass to be celebrated outside of a Catholic church or chapel.
2. Funeral Masses are not permitted on Solemnities that are Holydays of Obligation, Holy Thursday, the Sacred Paschal Triduum, and the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter Time [see *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, no. 380 and *Order of Christian Funerals*, no. 271].

§1402.4. Policy. Funeral Liturgy Outside Mass. When the Funeral Mass cannot or is not used, the Funeral Liturgy outside Mass shall be celebrated.

Procedures

1. See the pastoral notes at OCF, no. 178 for clarity on the various reasons.
2. As with the Funeral Mass, the Funeral Liturgy outside Mass is ordinarily celebrated in the parish church. For pastoral reasons, this liturgy may be celebrated in another suitable place: the home of the deceased, a funeral home, parlor, chapel of rest, or cemetery chapel [OCF, no. 179].

§1402.5. Policy. Masses for the Dead without the Body Present. When the body cannot be present for the usual Funeral Liturgy, a Mass for the Dead shall be celebrated.

Commentary.

The term “Memorial Mass” is often used to describe a Liturgy at which the body of the one who died is not or cannot be present, for example, when a body cannot be recovered from drowning.

The Order of Christian Funerals provides no specific rites. The Roman Missal along with the Lectionary of Mass does provide pastoral care for these situations in the Masses for the Dead. See:

- *II. On the Anniversary;*
- *III. Various Commemorations; and*
- *IV. Various Prayers for the Dead.*

Although “Mass in Commemoration of the Dead” or “Commemoration of the One Who Died” is proper language to describe these situations, “Memorial Mass” is in common usage and describes a Liturgy for the Dead at which the body is not present.

§1402.6. Policy. Rite of Committal. The Rite of Committal, the final ritual act of the community of faith, shall conclude the funeral rites of the Church.

Procedures

1. It is preferred that the committal take place at the open grave or place of interment [OCF, no. 204].
2. When neither a Priest or a Deacon is available for the committal, a layperson may lead [OCF, no. 14].
3. At a committal with military honors, Taps is played at the end of the Rite of Committal.

§1403. OFFICE OF THE DEAD

Commentary.

The pastoral notes in the Order of Christian Funerals, Part IV Office for the Dead, nos. 348-372 provide helpful guidance in praying Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer and incorporating them within the funeral rites preceding or following the Funeral Liturgy.

§1403.1. Policy. Praying the Office for the Dead. Pastoral ministers shall consider including Morning Prayer and/or Evening Prayer from the Office for the Dead when circumstances are warranted.

Procedures

1. Including Hours from the Office for the Dead may be especially helpful when there is an extended time between death and burial.
2. The reception of the body may be included in the introduction for Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer.
3. Morning Prayer may be suitable when the Vigil for the Deceased is not celebrated for some reason or it is celebrated and the family, friends, and faithful gather for an extended time before the Funeral Liturgy. It may also be suitable if the Funeral Liturgy occurs the evening before the Rite of Committal.

§1404. PASTORAL CARE FOR EASTERN CATHOLICS***Commentary.***

The diocesan Bishop is to provide for the spiritual needs of the faithful of different Catholic rites (see Canon 383§2).

§1404.1. Policy. Pastoral Care with the Faithful of Eastern Churches *sui iuris*.

Pastors shall provide Catholic Funeral Rites for the faithful of any of the Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris* in union with the Apostolic See when requested by family or friends of the one who died.

Commentary.

Sui iuris is the Latin term meaning “in his or her own right” or holding independence from another body. Concerning the Eastern Catholic Churches, Roman Catholics hold them in great esteem and always show great deference to their rites and traditions.

Procedures

1. The rites in the *Order of Christian Funerals* may be used by ministers of the Roman Rite with the faithful of any of the Eastern Catholic Churches *sui iuris* at the request of the family of the one who died.
2. Priests of the Roman Rite may not use the rites of an Eastern Church *sui iuris* without the permission of that Church, Eparchy, or the proper Bishop.
3. Contact the Office of the Chancellor if there is any doubt or concern with celebrating funeral rites with the faithful of Eastern Catholic Churches. (*Catholic Pastoral Center: (217) 698-8500*)

§1405. FUNERAL RITES IN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

§1405.1. Policy. Funeral Rites with Catechumens. Catechumens, since they are joined to the Church and are part of the household of Christ, shall receive a Christian burial when death occurs before Baptism.

Procedures

1. All of the rites in the *Order of Christian Funerals* may be celebrated with catechumens [RCIA, no. 47 and canon 183§2]. Adaptations may be made to texts to reflect catechumenal status.
2. Because of the baptism of desire tradition, the pall may be used with the funeral of a catechumen when there is confidence that was the desire of the one who died.

§1405.2. Policy. Funeral Rites with Unbaptized Children. Children who die before receiving Baptism shall be afforded Christian funeral rites.

Procedure

The *Roman Missal* provides texts for a Funeral Mass for a child who dies before Baptism. See the pastoral notes and the footnote at OCF, no. 237 for additional guidance and OCF, no. 48 to consider the appropriate rites to use.

§1405.3. Policy. Funeral Rites with Members of a Separated Church or Ecclesial Community. Consistent with the wishes of the one who died, Catholic funeral rites shall be granted with the baptized of other Churches or ecclesial communities, especially when their own minister is not available.

Commentary.

See Order of Christian Funerals, no. 18 and Province of Chicago Ecumenical Guidelines (1986) no. 118: “According to diocesan burial policy, members of a Church or ecclesial community not in full communion with the Catholic Church may be allowed funeral rites in the Catholic Church (Canon 1183§3).”

§1405.4. Policy. When Public Catholic Funeral Rites are Denied. Ordinarily, Catholic funeral rites shall be denied for notorious apostates, heretics, schismatics, those who chose cremation for reasons contrary to the Christian faith, and other manifest sinners if there would be scandal.

Commentary. *These defined terms will aid pastoral judgement concerning suitable pastoral care:*

- **Apostate** – one who totally repudiates the Christian faith;
- **Heretic** – one who, after Baptism, denies some divine truth of the Catholic faith or holds an obstinate doubt about the same;
- **Schismatic** – one who refuses obedience to the Supreme Pontiff or communion with the members of the Church in union with him;
- **Notorious** – anything that is publicly known;
- **Manifest sinner** – one whose grave sin is publicly known; and
- **Scandal** – an attitude of behavior which leads another to do evil [see CCC, no. 2284].

Procedures

1. Since any sign of repentance, public or private, will mitigate the above policy, ministers should exercise prudence in determining suitable pastoral care.
2. What may not be done in a public way may be done more privately.
3. A Priest may always offer Mass for the intention of any person.
4. If there is any doubt concerning this matter on what to do and how to proceed, contact the Office of the Chancellor for assistance. *Catholic Pastoral Center: (217) 698-8500.*

§1406. CREMATION***Commentary.***

The Order of Christian Funerals recognizes the long tradition of the Church for burial of the body as the principal or preferred practice. Until 1963 cremation was not acceptable under Church law.

§1406.1. Policy. When Cremation Is Permitted. While the Church clearly prefers and urges that the body of the deceased be present for the funeral rites, cremation is permitted even before these rites are celebrated. The cremated remains of a body shall be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come.

Procedures

1. In celebrating the funeral rites, attention is given to choosing suitable prayers that do not make reference to the honoring or burying of the body of the deceased (see OCF, nos. 428-431 and 437-438).
2. The Easter Candle and sprinkling the cremated remains with holy water is used. The pall and incensation of the remains are not used (see OCF, nos. 433-436).

§1406.2. Policy. When Funeral Rites with Cremated Remains Are Not Permitted. If the Catholic Church's desire concerning cremation is not respected, public funeral rites shall not be celebrated.

§1406.3. Policy. Vessel for the Cremated Remains of the Body. The vessel shall be dignified and worthy for holding the cremated remains of the body.
See Order of Christian Funerals, no. 427.

§1406.4. Policy. Funeral Liturgy in the Presence of the Cremated Remains. In the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois, it is permitted to celebrate any of the funeral rites in the presence of the cremated remains of the body.

Commentary.

Bishop Daniel Ryan issued a decree on 24 September 1997 granting permission for the cremated remains of the body to be present at the funeral rites within the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois. He further decreed that the appropriate ritual texts provided in the appendix on cremation be used on and after the mandatory use date of 2 November 1997.

Procedure

The *Appendix Cremation with Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites* by the Committee on the Liturgy (1997), with its pastoral notes and additional texts, is always used in this instance.

§1406.5. Policy. Interment of Cremated Remains. All of the cremated remains of a body shall be interred following the Rite of Committal. At no time and in no way shall the cremated remains be divided, separated, or interred in more than one place.

Commentary.

Common practices which are not consistent with the above policy include: scattering ashes on bodies of water, from the air, or on the ground; sending cremated remains of the body into space; keeping cremated remains in the home of a friend or relative of the deceased; dividing the cremated remains among several relatives or friends; and putting the cremated remains into jewelry and the like. Aside from the issue of the respect due to cremated remains, a number of practical problems arise with such practices: urns or vessels placed in homes could be stolen or damaged; the purpose of the urn could be forgotten by heirs of the original holder and the urn and contents could be sold at a garage or yard sale; cremated remains could be stored in an unsuitable place like an attic, basement storeroom, garage, or storage unit.

Procedure

Interment of cremated remains should not be unduly delayed following the funeral rites.

§1407. EULOGY

Commentary. *The Order of Christian Funerals, no. 27 states in part: “A brief homily based on the readings is always given after the gospel reading at the funeral liturgy [both within Mass and outside Mass] and may also be given after the readings at the vigil service; but there is never to be a eulogy....”*

Eulogy defined < Greek, praise, good word, lit. fine language >; a speech or writing in praise of a person, event, or thing, esp., a formal speech praising a person who has recently died.

§1407.1. Policy. Eulogy Not Appropriate in the Funeral Rites. A eulogy shall not be given or spoken within any of the funeral rites celebrated either in a church or in another suitable place by a minister, family member, or friend.

Procedures

1. The eulogy is not to be confused with “speaking in remembrance of the one who died” which the *Order of Christian Funerals* permits. See **§1408 TO SPEAK IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE DECEASED** immediately below.
2. If deemed appropriate by the family, a eulogy may be given in other gatherings, such as a wake at the home or the meal following committal. It does not, however, immediately precede or follow any of the Christian funeral rites.

§1408. TO SPEAK IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE DECEASED

Commentary. *The Order of Christian Funerals, nos. 80, 96, 170, 197, 288, and 309 state: “A member or a friend of the family may speak in remembrance of the deceased.” This is different than a eulogy. See §1407 Eulogy above.*

§1408.1. Policy. “To Speak in Remembrance” Defined. To speak in remembrance of the deceased shall not replace a homily or be given during the times for preaching. When given, it shall speak of the faith-life of the one who died and give praise to God.

§1408.2. Policy. When “To Speak in Remembrance” May be Given. *The Order of Christian Funerals* lists the rites and the places within the rites when speaking in remembrance of the deceased may be given. It shall not be given at any other places. It is not required.

Procedures

1. During the Vigil for the Deceased, it may be given following the Lord’s Prayer and Concluding Prayer before the Concluding rite [OCF, no. 80].
2. During the Vigil for the Deceased with Reception at the Church, it may be given following the Lord’s Prayer and Concluding Prayer before the Concluding Rite [OCF, no. 96].
3. During the Funeral Mass, it may be given following the Prayer after Communion just prior to the Final Commendation [OCF, no. 170].
4. During the Funeral Liturgy outside Mass, it may be given following the Lord’s Prayer [and Communion if it is given] just prior to the Final Commendation [OCF, no. 197].
5. In the Funeral Rites for Children, during the Funeral Mass, it may be given following the Prayer after Communion just prior to the Final Commendation [OCF, no. 288].
6. In the Funeral Rites for Children, during the Funeral Liturgy outside Mass, it may be given following the Lord’s Prayer [and Communion if it is given] just prior to the Final Commendation [OCF, no. 309].

§1408.3. Policy. How “To Speak in Remembrance” is Prepared, Approved, and Given. The pastor or the presiding minister shall assist the family and friends of the one who died with the following procedures on preparing, approving, and giving “to speak in remembrance of the deceased.” The following procedures shall serve as guidelines.

Commentary.

Quite often, the inappropriate desire to speak in remembrance of the one who died can:

- *be unprepared, a rambling presentation;*
- *be lengthy, longer than a homily or the Eucharistic Prayer;*
- *be given by more than one person;*

- *fail to mention the faith-life of the one who died, fail to praise God, and become a recital of only secular concerns, events, or stories.*

Procedures

1. These words will be brief, generally three to four minutes in length, about 250 to 350 words.
2. During any of the funeral rites, there will be only one speaker.
3. The one who speaks will make reference to the faith-life of the one who died. For example:
 - a. We give thanks to God for N. because of....
 - b. God worked through N. to make / provide....
4. These words should not be remembrances that only praise the person, for example:
 - a. What a great person N. was because he/she did...
 - b. N. is surely in heaven because...
5. The speaker will compose this text prior to the liturgy, give the written text it to the presiding minister in advance for approval of content and length.
6. Speaking in remembrance of the deceased is not a necessary part of the funeral rites. These brief words are permitted by the ritual book and Catholic practice when they will bring hope and comfort to the bereaved.

Commentary.

Additional speakers may do so, at the discretion of the family, outside of the funeral rites, for example, during the wake or at the reception following burial.

§1409. ACCEPTING REMAINS AT CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

§1409.1. Policy. Catholic Cemeteries and Receiving Cremated Remains. Catholic cemeteries within the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois shall receive and inter cremated remains of a body with the same dignity and respect as the mortal remains of the body.

Procedures

1. Catholic cemeteries in the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois will only accept cremated remains of a body for burial in the ground or for placement in a columbarium or mausoleum.
2. Catholic cemeteries may not accept only part of the cremated remains of the body when the rest of them are placed elsewhere, for example, in one or more private home(s), scattered over the ground or water, placed in jewelry, or maintained in some other way inconsistent with the policy unless there are significant pastoral reasons that would allow burial.
3. Catholic cemeteries will not accept an urn or vessel containing the cremated remains of more than one individual unless there are significant pastoral reasons that would allow burial. Only the diocesan Bishop, his representative, or the priest who is the celebrant for the funeral rites will determine if pastoral reasons warrant such action.
4. The diocesan Office of Property, Buildings and Cemeteries will issue rules and regulations as needed to further delineate these matters. (*Catholic Pastoral Center: (217) 698-8500*)
5. A Catholic cemetery may never open a sealed urn or vessel and place any of the contents of another urn or vessel in it.
6. A Catholic cemetery, with the presence of a funeral director, may place a sealed urn or vessel into a vault or grave already occupied by another.

§1409.2. Policy. Burial of Non-Catholics. Catholic cemeteries within the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois shall offer pastoral care to families requesting the burial of a non-Catholic. The minister of the Church or ecclesial community in which the one who died shared belief or communion may conduct the committal service.

Procedures

Parish ministers and Catholic cemeteries will attend to the norms in the *Province of Chicago Ecumenical Guidelines* (1986) concerning funerals and burials.

PCEG, no. 118. According to diocesan burial policy, members of a Church or ecclesial community not in full communion with the Catholic Church may be allowed funeral rites in the Catholic Church (Canon 1183§3).

PCEG, no. 119. A member of a Church or ecclesial community not in full communion with the Catholic Church may be buried in a family plot in a Catholic cemetery if burial elsewhere would result in separating members of the same family. The minister of the deceased may conduct the burial service. If one is not available, a priest or deacon may conduct the Catholic burial service, if so requested. They may also conduct the Catholic wake service [Vigil for the Deceased] at the home or at the funeral parlor is requested.

§1409.3. Policy. Christian Burial Inappropriate. Under certain circumstances Christian burial is inappropriate. Canon 1184 states that unless they have given some signs of repentance before their death, the following are to be deprived of ecclesiastical funeral rites:

- (1) notorious apostates, heretics, and schismatics;
- (2) persons who had chosen cremation of their own bodies for reasons opposed to the Christian faith;
- (3) other manifest sinners for whom ecclesiastical funeral rites cannot be granted without public scandal to the faithful.

Procedures

- a) Before denying Christian funeral rites to anyone or granting funeral rites to someone with a "notorious" reputation, the parish priest is to consult the Office of the Chancellor. The decision of the Bishop or his delegate in these matter is determinative. (Canon 1184.2)
- b) Two extremes are to be avoided: 1) harshness toward those who have been estranged from the Church, and 2) scandalous leniency toward notorious criminals. In some cases, Christian funeral rites may be allowed but publication prohibited. If a Mass of Christian Burial is denied, no funeral Mass whatsoever may be offered for the deceased, whether at the funeral home or any other place. (Canon 1185) A memorial Mass may be scheduled for a later date.

§1410. RESOURCES

The following are universal and particular law for Christian funeral rites.

Order of Christian Funerals [OCF] (1989)

- This ritual book not only provides the many rites and prayers used in Christian funerals but also gives the basic vision, method, and norms in the General Introduction.

Appendix Cremation with Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites by the Committee on the Liturgy (1997)

- Publishers of ritual and study editions provide an insert that is attached to the back cover for books published prior to 1997.
- It contains OCM, nos. 411-438 with pastoral notes and additional ritual texts.

- It concludes with the USCCB statement *Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites by the Committee on the Liturgy*.
- *Ritual books printed after the Appendix Cremation was issued in 1997 contain the entire appendix and do not need the insert.*

Ritual de Exequias Christianas (2001)

- This is the edition of OCF produced and approved for use in the dioceses of the United States of America. No other Spanish translation may be used in the dioceses of this conference.

Lectionary for Mass, second typical edition [LM] (1998 and 2001)

- LM, Volume IV provides the biblical texts for the various Ritual Masses for the Christian funerals.

Roman Missal, Third Edition [RM] (2011)

- The missal provides the prayers for the various Masses for the Dead.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS [now, USCCB], Committee on the Liturgy [now, Committee on Divine Worship] *Reflections on the Body, Cremation, and Catholic Funeral Rites by the Committee on the Liturgy* (1997). ISBN: 1-57455-033-0.

CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, **Instruction** *Ad resurgendum cum Christo* regarding the burial of the deceased and the conservation of the ashes in the case of cremation, 15 August 2016.

Also from the Province of Chicago:

Province of Chicago Ecumenical Guidelines (1986).

- Chapter VIII, Funerals and Burials, nos. 117-119.

Also from the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois:

OFFICE FOR WORSHIP/COMMISSION FOR THE LITURGY. *Celebrating the Funeral Rites of the Roman Catholic Church: A Collection of Articles from Gatherings, Newsletter of the Office for Worship and Commission for the Liturgy*, 1997.

- Access in the *Pastoral Leadership Manual, Volume II* or on the diocesan Website: www.dio.org/worship Policy & Guidelines – Funerals

BISHOP DANIEL RYAN. *Guidelines for the Order of Christian Funerals (Celebrating the Rites)*, Diocese of Springfield in Illinois, January 1998.

BISHOP THOMAS JOHN PAPROCKI. Letter on death, Christian burial, and cremation, 19 October 2011.

Contact the diocesan Office for Divine Worship and the Catechumenate for bibliographies and other resources for Christian funerals:

- *Email: worship@dio.org or*
- *Website: www.dio.org/worship Policy & Guidelines – Funerals or*
- *Phone: (217) 698-8500.*