

LITURGICAL SYMBOLS - FUNERAL MINISTRY



Our Catholic Funeral Liturgy emphasises our faith in the Resurrection. We believe that death is not the end, but the beginning of a wonderful, permanent life with Jesus Christ and the saints in heaven. Through the many ceremonies and symbols that are part of our Catholic faith, we find hope and peace in the midst of our sorrow. In order to help make our funeral liturgy more consoling and understandable, we offer an explanation of *some* of our liturgical symbols.

The celebrant of our Funeral Eucharist wears **white vestments**. The colour white is associated with the resurrection and also used at Eastertide, Weddings, Baptisms and other joyous liturgical celebrations.

The **Paschal Candle** is lit to symbolize the Risen Jesus, the Light of the world. This candle stands in the sanctuary space to greet the body of our loved one. Through his/her death, he/she shares in the victory of Jesus over the power of darkness.

When sprinkled **with Easter Water** we share in the Lord's death and resurrection through the waters of our baptism. The same cleansing water that made us children of God at our Baptism is sprinkled over the coffin containing the body of our loved one to remind us of the grace and hope that we have in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A symbol of Christian life, such as a **Bible**, a **Book of the Gospels**, or a **Crucifix** may be placed on the coffin as a sign that our loved one called in Baptism, and through Jesus' victory over death is welcomed to eternal life.

The **white pall** used to drape over the coffin (usually by family members) at the beginning of the liturgy reminds us of the white garment given to us at our Baptism symbolizing our union with Christ, our Redeemer.

The **hymns/ songs** express our belief that death is a passage to ultimate resurrection and eternal union with Christ. The music reflects the theme of expectant joy.

What more perfect way is there to share in the Funeral Liturgy than to receive **Holy Communion**. Jesus said at the Last Supper "I am the Bread of Life. Whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup will have eternal life and I will raise him/her up on the last day".

The celebrant will give a brief **homily** based on the scriptures chosen for the Funeral Liturgy. He will most likely want to speak with you about your loved one's life so he can integrate the particular texts you have chosen into his homily.

The last ceremony after the Funeral Liturgy and at the cemetery is the Liturgy of **Final Farewell or Commendation and Committal**. This can be the most difficult time for the family and friends of the deceased. However, this is more than an end; it is a beginning of our loved one's eternal life in heaven with the Risen Lord and the communion of saints.



Also Click Here on YouTube to See: - [The Real Purpose of Funerals](#)