

When a Funeral cannot be attended

*My soul is waiting for the Lord,
I count on his word.
Because with the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption.*

The response to the Covid-19 pandemic mean that restrictions have been placed around funerals. For many people this will mean that they are not able to attend the Funeral Mass or Liturgy of a relative or a friend and to take that opportunity to console the bereaved and offer prayer for the soul of the deceased. This leaflet offers a short time of prayer for use at home at the time of the funeral. It is intended to be used by either individuals or a group (where they live in the same house).

Introduction

Some will find it helpful to have a space as a focus for their prayer. This might include a crucifix, icon or other holy image, and a lighted candle. It might also include an image of the deceased.

Before you begin you may wish to bring to mind memories of the deceased. Also hold in your prayers those who are able to attend the funeral.

Where there is N. in a prayer replace with the name of the deceased.

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

We believe that all the ties of friendship and affection which knit us as one throughout our lives do not unravel with death.

Confident that God always remembers the good we have done and forgives our sins, let us pray, asking God to gather N. to himself.

Prayer

Pause for silent prayer.

God of all consolation,
open our hearts to your word,
so that, listening to it, we may comfort one another,
finding light in time of darkness
and faith in time of doubt.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Word of God

Choose to read one of the Gospel texts.

Gospel

Luke 23:44–46 50. 52–53

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

It was about the sixth hour and with the sun eclipsed, a darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. The veil of the temple was torn right down the middle, and when Jesus had cried out in a loud voice, he said, 'Father into your hands I commit my spirit'. With these words he breathed his last.

Then a member of the council arrived, an upright and virtuous man named Joseph. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. He then took it down, wrapped it in a shroud and put him in a tomb which was hewn in stone in which no one had yet been laid.

The gospel of the Lord

OR

John 14:1-6

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house; if there were not, I should have told you. I am going now to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am you may be too. You know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?'

Jesus said: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me.'

The gospel of the Lord.

Silent reflection

Pause for a moment of silent reflection.

Prayers

Intercessions

You may wish to add your own intentions to the prayers below.

If the following intentions are said in a group you may wish to conclude each one with the response:

Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer

For the family and friends of N., may they be consoled by our prayers.

For all who work to look after our health, may be given protection and strength.

For all who are suffering at this time, may they know compassion and hope.

For N. may he/she encounter God's mercy and enter into eternal life.

You may wish to add:

Mary is the comforter of mourners. Hail Mary...

Lord's Prayer

Our Father...

Prayer

God of loving kindness,

listen favourably to our prayers:

strengthen our belief that your Son has risen from the dead
and our hope that your servant N. will also rise again.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon him/her.

May he/she rest in peace.

Amen.

May his/her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Amen.

May the love of God and the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ
bless and console us

and gently wipe every tear from our eyes:

In the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Conclusion

You may wish to follow your time of prayer by playing a favourite piece of music of the deceased, if you are with others sharing some memories and may be even raising a glass of something.

Additional Prayers

Invocation of Our Lady

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known
that anyone who fled to your protection,
implored your help, or sought your intercession
was left unaided.

Inspired with this confidence,
I fly to you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother.
To you I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate,
despise not my petitions,
but in your mercy, hear and answer me.

Prayer of St John Henry Newman

O Lord,
support us all the day long of this troublous life,
until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes,
and the busy world is hushed,
and the fever of life is over, and our work is done.
Then, Lord, in thy mercy,
grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest,
and peace at the last.
Amen.