

Funeral Information Policy, Effective July 3, 2018

At the time of laying our loved ones to rest there are many questions typically asked regarding the Church, her ministers, and fees. We hope the following information is helpful to you.

1. The Priest Who Celebrates the Mass

a. When the Priest Assigned to the Parish celebrates Mass

- i. A monetary donation/gift to the priest assigned to the parish who celebrates the Mass is always acceptable and appreciated; this is a ***customary donation of a minimum of \$125*** (check made payable to the Priest's Name; or cash in an envelope marked "Priest" is also acceptable).
- ii. Currently, the priest assigned to the parish is Reverend James F. Arwady.

b. When a Visiting Priest to the Parish celebrates Mass *when* Rev. James F. Arwady is available (i.e., the family chooses the Priest celebrant)

- i. If the family chooses or requests a particular priest to celebrate the Funeral Mass when Father James is available, then a ***required \$100 stipend*** and an additional ***customary donation of a minimum of \$125*** is to be paid directly to that priest-of-choice's name, (check made payable to the Priest's Name; or cash in an envelope marked "Priest" is also acceptable).

c. When a Visiting Priest to the Parish celebrates Mass *when* Rev. James F. Arwady is not available

- i. In the event a Funeral Mass is requested at Saint Christopher when Father James is away, a visiting priest that can be found and is willing and able to celebrate the Funeral Mass (and Vigil Scripture Service, and Committal Prayers, as applicable), is permitted.
- ii. In this case then, a monetary donation/gift to the visiting priest who celebrates the Mass is always acceptable and appreciated, which is a ***customary donation of a minimum of \$125*** (check made payable to the Priest's Name; or cash in an envelope marked "Priest" is also acceptable).

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- d. Note that all substitute priests are subject to approval by the existing Pastor and any priest celebrating Mass must officially be in good standing with the Archdiocese of Detroit; this is non-negotiable.

2. Church Operations, Utilities and Maintenance

A ***required minimum of \$150*** monetary donation to the Parish Church for operations, staff, utilities, supplies and maintenance is used to cover these and other costs incurred for the celebration of the Funeral Rituals (check made payable to Saint Christopher Catholic Church; or cash in an envelope marked “Church” is acceptable).

3. Date of Funeral Mass

Due to the shrinking number of priests and increasing responsibilities, priests may *not* be available to celebrate a Funeral Mass on the date the family desires; this is an unfortunate circumstance beyond our control, for which we deeply apologize. *Only the Priest Celebrant can approve a desired date for a Funeral Mass celebration.* It would therefore be preparatory for the family to have at least two different dates in mind when contacting the Priest.

4. Music and Singing

A musician stipend of \$125 is ***required*** to be paid directly to the musician’s name (or cash in an envelope marked “Musician” is also acceptable). Our current musician is Deidre Collins, but a substitute musician may be playing on a rare occasion. Please check with our Parish Office as needed.

Additionally, since *not* all musicians are cantors, frequently a cantor is scheduled to sing, which is typically the case. A cantor stipend of ***\$50 is required*** when a cantor sings. A check made payable to *the Cantor’s Name*, or cash in an envelope marked “cantor” or “singer” is also acceptable.

5. Altar Servers

An ***optional*** monetary donation or gift to the altar servers is usually a surprise but is also acceptable and appreciated. These monetary gifts are customarily a ***minimum of \$20*** per altar server. Cash in an envelope marked “Altar Server” is preferred. If a check is to be written, then each altar server must receive an individual check made payable to his/her name.

6. Luncheons at Saint Christopher's Parish Social Hall

For those funerals with luncheons to occur in our social hall, there are *two business days reasonably required* before the funeral mass can occur so that proper plans may be made in order to accommodate the luncheon. Business days are Monday through Friday.

- a. When planning for funerals *with luncheons in our social hall*, please contact the parish during business office hours (Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 4 pm, and Friday, 9 am – 2 pm).
- b. If a loved one passes on to eternal life on Friday afternoon, Saturday, or Sunday, then the earliest a *funeral mass with a luncheon in our social hall* can reasonably occur is Wednesday *if* a substitute priest can be found. Otherwise, Thursday. Some exceptions can be made depending on how early the pastor is directly contacted.
  - i. Funeral Masses, however, *without luncheons* in our social hall could *possibly* be on Monday or Tuesday; please check with the Pastor.
  - ii. Note: If a funeral mass is to be celebrated on a Wednesday, then a substitute priest will be necessary as the existing pastor is unavailable most Wednesdays of the year.
- c. If there is a parish luncheon in our social hall, the meats for the luncheon are *required* to be *reimbursed on the day of the funeral*. Please come to the main office (or, if the funeral luncheon was on Saturday, then please contact the main office on Monday during normal business office hours in order to obtain the total owed and complete the payment).

7. General Notes:

- a. In order to save the family from the further burden of making more decisions, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Lectors (Readers), Musicians and Cantors, as well as the readings for the Mass will be provided by Saint Christopher's Parish. Some exceptions can be made; please check with the Parish Office.
- b. On the occasion when a family member (or friend of the family) is an ordained *Deacon* in the Roman Catholic Church and wishes to serve at

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the Mass, they may serve according to their role at the priest celebrant's discretion presuming they are validly ordained and are in good standing with the Archdiocese of Detroit and can show valid proof.

- c. On the occasion when a family member (or friend of the family) is an ordained *Priest* in the Roman Catholic Church and wishes to serve at the Mass, they may serve according to their role at the priest celebrant's discretion presuming they are validly ordained and are in good standing with the Archdiocese of Detroit and can show valid proof; or they may celebrate the Mass in its entirety only with the approval of the Pastor of Saint Christopher's.

8. Eulogies

Eulogies may only be given at the Vigil Scripture Service at the Funeral Home on the evening before the morning of the Funeral Mass. Eulogies are most appropriate for the Vigil, where anyone and everyone who would like to speak or share memories of the deceased may do so.

Laying our loved ones to rest is one of the most important and last things we can do for them. We have provided this rather extensive information with the hope that it will ease the impact of "funeral plans" and assist all through the grief process in order to have a true celebration of eternal life while we hope and look forward to our own future resurrection when we shall all see, recognize, and be with our loved ones again.

For any further questions, please call our main parish office at (810)-364-4100 during normal business office hours.