



Guidelines for Death and Funeral Arrangements of Clergy

Current as at 23 April 2018

Notification of the death

Upon the death of a Sydney bishop, priest or deacon, it is important that the Vicar General be notified as soon as possible.

The office will then notify the Archbishop and will release notifications to relevant interested parties soon following including email notification to clergy, staff and agencies.

The priest executor may be called upon to provide assistance and clarification of any particular details regarding the ministry of the deceased.

Communications

Soon after, and following approval from the family, the Archdiocese (via Catholic Communications) will release notification of the death in the following order:

1. Email sent from the Vicar General to bishops, priests and deacons
2. Email sent from the Vicar General to staff and agencies

After consultation with the family and/or executors, Catholic Communications may wish to release the information via the social media channels of the Archdiocese. This should include a photo of the deceased and details on his ministry and other particulars that he has been involved with.

Arrangements for the Funeral

The family and/or executors will choose a funeral director to assist with the transport of the deceased to the funeral home and to prepare the body for burial.

Where possible, the Archbishop will be the principal celebrant for the funeral Mass and it is essential that communication with the Master of Ceremonies is done early with the planning. If the Archbishop is not able to attend (e.g. overseas), an auxiliary bishop should be the principal celebrant. The date for the Funeral Mass should be confirmed soon after, and this must be in consultation with the Chancery office who will liaise with the Archbishop's office, or auxiliary bishop's office to settle a date and time for the Funeral Mass.

In some instances, the deceased may express the desire for another bishop or member of the clergy to be the principal celebrant, in which case the Archbishop or bishops will attend as concelebrants, or 'in choir'.

The preacher at the Mass may be best suited to a friend of the deceased who is a bishop, priest or deacon, to be determined by the executors in consultation with the principal celebrant

Eulogies should be kept to one only, of a moderate length, particularly describing the ministry of the deceased.

The Funeral Mass

The Funeral Mass should be prepared with the input of family members, the executors and the Archdiocesan Master of Ceremonies. The readings, prayers, and rubrics should be referenced from the *The Roman Ritual and the Order of Christian Funerals*.

The priest-executor is to liaise with the Vicar for Clergy and MC to arrange the music in consultation with the family. If this is not the case, the parish should be contacted for the possibility of providing the music.

The Archdiocese can support with the design and production of a funeral booklet. Please contact the Director, Catholic Creative if this is required to discuss details and the information required.

Suitable arrangements for the seating of concelebrating clergy in the church should be provided nearest to the sanctuary.