

## Funeral Mass with Casket

3 servers

(MC/Thurifer, CB, and A1/Holy Water)

A Funeral Mass with a Casket is similar to a Daily Mass but the casket will be blessed with Holy Water and incensed.

### Preparation

- Arrive 20 minutes before the funeral begins.
- *Thurible* and *Incense Boat*- These are prepared in the Priest's Sacristy by the MC, ½ charcoal should be used. Be sure the boat is filled with incense. **DO NOT LIGHT THE THURIBLE UNTIL AFTER COMMUNION.**
- Fill the *Aspergillum* with a small amount of Holy Water.
- **Credence table**- Water cruet and tray, Chalice set up, finger bowl and towel, wine cups if used (**ask Priest if wine cups will be used, typically wine cups are not used at Funeral Masses**).
- **Altar**- Roman Missal should be placed on the Altar.
- **Gift table**- Wine cruet and 1-2 ciboria (**ask Priest if gifts will be brought up by the family**).
- Check with Priest to see what Funeral prayer book will be used and whether or not he would like the MC to hold it for him.

### Eulogy

- A family member or close family friend will usually give a eulogy before Mass begins.

### Procession

- Procession begins in front of the baptistery (approximately at the 2<sup>nd</sup> pew from the back), where the Priest will bless the casket with Holy Water. **A1** is holding the Holy Water and is always on the right of the Priest. **CB** is in the center holding the Cross, facing the casket. **MC** is on the Priest's left and holds the Funeral prayer book for the Priest (if

necessary). Pall is placed over the casket. Turn towards the Altar and process in with the Priest once the opening song begins, the casket will follow behind.

- All servers head directly toward benches without bowing. **A1** places Holy Water next to Credence table, **CB** places Cross in stand and **MC** waits next to the Credence table with the Funeral prayer book (if necessary) until the Priest to says “*Let us pray.*”

### **Offertory**

- At the Offertory, **CB** quickly gets the Cross and walks around the church and meets the family members at the back of church. **CB** leads the procession of gifts up the center aisle. The Priest and servers stand in FRONT of the casket to receive the gifts. Be aware the **CB** needs a space to step through as they need to place the Cross back on its stand at the Altar.

### **After Communion**

- After you receive Communion, the **MC** goes back to the Priest’s Sacristy to light the charcoal for the Thurible. One half a charcoal is usually all that is needed for a regular funeral Mass. Place the charcoal piece in the Thurible and light all the edges. Please be aware, the charcoal pieces will spark, this is normal and shows that it is lit properly. **BE VERY CAREFUL DOING THIS.**
- Walk back towards the Altar walking around the edge of the church carrying the Thurible and Incense Boat. Stand by the piano in a ready position. The Thurible should be held by the chain or placed on the tile floor (**NEVER place a Thurible with hot charcoals on the Credence table**).
- **When the CB and A1 are cleaning up the Altar, leave the Roman Missal there.**

### **Final Blessing and Procession**

- **MC** brings the Thurible and Incense Boat up to the Priest towards the front of the Altar
- Priest takes Incense Boat and places incense into Thurible. Priest then trades the Incense Boat and takes the Thurible from the server to incense the casket. Remain standing there, the Priest will give you the Thurible back after the blessing.
- **CB stays in place at the benches while A1 brings the Funeral prayer book to the Priest and holds it for him (if necessary).**

- After the Prayer of Final Commendation, the Priest will go to the Altar and kiss it.
- **CB** retrieves the Cross, **A1** holds the Funeral prayer book (if necessary) and all process out with the Priest in front. **MC** will process out holding the Thurible.
- Typically, one last final blessing/prayer over the casket is done in the back of church. The Priest will need Holy Water to bless the family cross. Altar Servers remain there with the Priest until excused.
- Usual clean up of all items. Extinguish the incense charcoals completely in the flowerbed. Tip the Thurible and pour the charcoals pieces onto the soil, pour a full pitcher of water over them. **Do not walk away until they are completely extinguished.**
- **Leave the Thurible out on the counter to cool off.**

### **Tips on How to hold the Thurible**

- Hold the Thurible in your dominant hand, so if you are left handed, do the opposite of below.
- Put your left thumb through the metal ring and hold your left hand above your head.
- With your right hand palm facing upwards, lift the top of the Thurible between your 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> fingers.
- Pinch the chain with your right thumb and first finger when the top is about 6-8 inches above the base.
- Move your left hand towards your chest.
- Lift your right hand up to the proper level, depending on the height of the Priest/Deacon that is presiding.
- Slowly swing the Thurible as you walk with it.

### **Tips on Lighting the charcoal**

- Don't forget that charcoal is messy and you are wearing a white robe, so be careful.
- Use tongs to hold charcoal and light it.
- Sparks are a good sign.
- Blow on charcoal, you are looking for an orange glow.
- Put lighted charcoal into Thurible with more charcoal.
- Swing Thurible back and forth to get oxygen flowing inside.
- Charcoal will turn grey when hot.