



The Roman Catholic
Diocese of Thunder Bay

Guidelines for the Funeral
of a Permanent Deacon

Policy Guidelines for the Funeral of a Permanent Deacon Diocese of Thunder Bay, Ontario

Preamble:

The death and funeral of a permanent deacon (and / or his wife*) is an occasion for the entire diaconal community and the Church to join in prayer, mourning and mutual support for their deceased brother and the family. The following guidelines are offered to assist, always respecting and honouring any written instructions or the deceased family's wishes. (*see the preamble to the explanatory notes - attached)

1. The deceased brother deacon is to be accorded the full funeral ritual of the Catholic Church, which includes the celebration of the Wake /Vigil Liturgy, the Funeral Mass and the Committal Service.
2. The funeral of a permanent deacon would normally take place in the parish church where the deacon was in ministry, or the last parish where the deacon was assigned in ministry. If pastoral reasons suggest otherwise, or if the wishes of the family deem otherwise, the funeral may take place in another parish church. If the funeral is to take place outside the Diocese of Thunder Bay, then a Memorial Mass may be celebrated at an appropriate time within the Diocese.
3. The diaconal community, or its representative, in consultation with the parish priest, is to support and assist the grieving family in the decision-making for the funeral liturgy where necessary and desired, advising them of the norms that have been established and approved by the Bishop.
4. Normally a permanent deacon is to be waked for a time in the parish church where the Wake / Vigil Service and Funeral Mass are to take place.
5. For the Wake / Vigil Service, the deceased deacon is to be attired in his alb and white stole (and dalmatic, if available). If pastoral reasons suggest otherwise, then the deceased may be dressed in a suit and clerical collar, or suit and tie, always taking into consideration the wishes of the family. It is highly recommended that some indication be readily visible that the deceased was an ordained clergyman. (v.g. Deacon's stole in the casket, or on top of the casket, a deacon pin on the suit's lapel, an open Bible on a lectern nearby, etc.) If cremains are present, the deacon stole and a fitting urn for the ashes may be displayed with an open Bible as well.
6. For the Funeral Mass, the casket is to be closed before the liturgy begins and covered with a pall as a sign of Baptism. An open Bible is to be placed on top of the pall as a sign that the deceased was an ordained minister of the Word of God. The Pascal Candle is placed in an appropriate location near the casket according to custom. It is understood that a Memorial Mass will be celebrated in the event that the deceased has been cremated, however similar, fitting symbols should be displayed with a suitable urn.

7. For the Funeral Liturgies, it is recommended that the members of the diaconal community participate in an active way - through preaching, sharing the readings, intercessions, hymns and service at the Vigil, the Altar and the Committal. All deacons should be vested and the diaconal community should be a part of the procession and all should also come to the Altar to receive the Precious Body and Blood at communion time during the Mass.

It is recommended that a brother permanent deacon preach at the Funeral Mass where the ministry of deacon can be emphasized and a relation to the ministry performed by the deceased can be noted. The wishes of the family, however, are to be considered and respected in this regard. *All is to be kept in accordance with the general liturgical norms of the Church for funerals.*

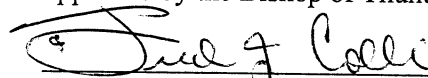
8. It is recommended that the deacons present be vested and sit with their spouses as a community. Where appropriate, the permanent deacons and their spouses may participate in an honour guard at the Funeral Mass and again at the Committal. The wishes of the family are to be considered and respected in this regard.

9. When appropriate, special consideration should be given for time when one or more of the relatives and friends could share experiences, thoughts and remembrances of the deceased during the celebration of the Wake / Vigil Service or at the Committal Service and / or at the reception following these services. It is recommended that a member or members of the diaconal community take part in these sharings. Every opportunity should be given for this practice, since it assists in the healing process for everyone involved, especially the members of the family. One of these sharings may be delivered prior to the Funeral Mass. In keeping with Diocesan norms, this sharing should be no longer than five minutes out of respect for those present.

10. If there is a difficulty with the decisions made concerning the Funeral Liturgies for a permanent deacon, the parish priest and the Bishop are to be consulted and the Bishop is to make any final decisions.

It is understood that, after the celebration of the Funeral Liturgies, the diaconal community continues to support and assist the deceased's family, in particular his spouse, in whatever ways they can, through prayer and presence. Church expenses, including stole fees and parish hall rentals, are either waived or paid by the Diocese. Funeral expenses, including the funeral home, casket, cremation, internment and the reception, are normally the responsibility of the family.

These Policy Guidelines were examined and approved by the Bishop of Thunder Bay and the diaconal community.



Most Rev. Fred Colli
Bishop of Thunder Bay

Dated: February 2, 2000
Amended: March 2006 December 2006

Explanatory Notes for the Policy Guidelines of the Funeral of Permanent Deacon

Diocese of Thunder Bay

(The numbers of the explanatory notes correspond to the numbers of the Policy Guidelines.)

Preamble:

In the case of the death of a Minister of Service or the spouse of a deacon, some of the same policy guidelines might apply and others would not. The appropriate arrangements for the funeral rites are to be ordered by the surviving deacon and / or his family as would normally take place for one of the faithful. If the Diocesan bishop presides at the Funeral Mass or any of the other rites, then the appropriate protocols for celebrations with the Diocesan bishop would apply. Such protocols are available from the Diocesan Office of Worship.

1. Full funeral rites for the Catholic Church are contained in the Order for Christian Funerals published as the official liturgy of the Catholic Church. The special prayers for a 'deacon' should be used. If cremation takes place, then the proper steps of the liturgy are to be followed for those who are cremated, including the proper display of the cremains.

2. The parish church where the deacon was in ministry is the most appropriate place for the Funeral Mass. The deacon may be waked in the church in the evening before the Funeral Mass and the Wake / Vigil Service may take place in the church at a prescribed hour so that as many of the faithful as possible may attend. If the deacon is retired from ministry, the Funeral Mass should take place in the church where the deacon regularly worshiped. The family may suggest another church for personal reasons. The bishop of the Diocese may also suggest another parish church. In this case, the directions of the bishop are to be followed. The pastor of the parish selected is to be consulted in a timely manner regarding all arrangements.

3. A member of the diaconal community, normally a deacon and his wife, chosen in consultation with the grieving family, would assist by clarifying the guidelines and helping to make any arrangements for the funeral services and reception(s). *The family and the diaconal community are to work in co operation with the parish priest, parish organizations and the Diocesan Office of Worship.*

4. The Wake / Vigil in the parish church is not absolutely necessary and the wishes of the family are to be observed in this regard. The wake of a deceased deacon is not to interfere with the celebrations of the Eucharist that would normally take place in the parish church for the good of the faithful. This should all be coordinated by the appropriate member of the diaconal community in co operation with the parish priest.

5. The deceased deacon is normally attired in his alb and white stole. A dalmatic may be used if one is available; it should also be white. If the family says otherwise for personal reasons, the deceased may be attired in a suit and clerical shirt or suit and tie. This should be made known to the appropriate persons involved in the funeral planning. It is recommended that some sign of the diaconal ministry exercised by the deceased be evident during the Wake period and at the Funeral Mass.

6. The closing of the casket and the covering with the white pall are standard procedures for the Funeral Mass. If the deacon is waked in the church on a slanted bier, then the casket should be closed and then placed on the movable cart normally used for a Funeral Mass. These procedures should be done discreetly in sufficient time before the Funeral Mass begins. The funeral directors in charge of these tasks should be informed of this duty well in advance.

7. Full participation by the diaconal community in the funeral services is recommended. The family of the deceased is to be consulted as to their wishes and the diaconal community should be ready to offer their services to the family. The preaching at the Funeral Mass should emphasize the work of the deceased for the church community and the relationship of this ministry of service to Christ the Lord. There should only be one homily at the Funeral Mass. A homily may also be preached at the Wake / Vigil Service and a short reflection may be given at the Committal. It is not necessary that the same person preach at all the Services. The suggestions or directives of the Bishop, if given, are always to be followed, and the parish priest is to be informed.

8. The Honour Guard is a means of showing solidarity and support to the deceased's spouse and family as a diaconal community. In deciding on this option, care should be taken to follow the wishes of the family, and the general structure of the church in order that this does not impede the proper execution of the recessional. Instructions or directions from those responsible for the planning should be sought.

9. According to the General Norms of the Church for funeral liturgies (number 27) a brief homily is to follow the readings of the Funeral Mass, but not a eulogy. There is an appropriate place in the Wake / Vigil Service, just before the concluding rite, and also in the Committal Service after the final blessing, for friends and / or family to share some brief remembrances in a public way. If the family requests an intervention at the Funeral Mass by a family member or friend to share some words of reflection on the life of the deceased and its meaning to the community, then permission should be sought from the pastor or another appropriate authority and communicated to all involved in the planning. Certain guidelines will then apply, namely that this reflection be brief and be delivered just before the Funeral Mass begins.

Ample time should be accorded for the sharing of reflections and memories at the reception following the funeral rites, which is the most appropriate time for this practice. Care should be taken that anything added to the funeral liturgies is reflective of the faith of the deceased in light of the Pascal Mystery.

10. Since the deceased is an ordained minister of the Church and directly subject to the Diocesan bishop through his ordination, then the decisions of the Diocesan bishop are to be followed at all times.

Dated: February 2, 2000

Amended: March 2006 December 2006



DIOCESE OF THUNDER BAY



Funeral Liturgy for: _____

Vigil Service in the Chapel (evening before Funeral Mass)

Date: _____ Time: _____ Funeral Chapel: _____

First Reading: _____ Read by: _____

Psalm _____ Read by: _____

Second Reading _____ Read by: _____

Eulogy: Yes No Read by: _____

Funeral Mass in Church or Funeral Service in Chapel

FUNERAL MASS (in the Church) SERVICE (in the Funeral Chapel)

Date: _____ Time: _____

First Reading _____ Read by: _____

Psalm _____ Read by: _____ (Psalm is sung, if there is Mass)

Second Reading _____ Read by: _____

(For Mass ONLY) Procession with Bread & Wine: Yes No By: _____

(For Mass ONLY) Requested Hymns: 1. _____ 2. _____

Casket Urn 3. _____ 4. _____

Photograph

Burial: After Funeral Later

Reception: In Church Auditorium OR at: _____

Please refer to the Diocesan Pamphlet "Comfort and Peace" concerning Words of Remembrance of the Deceased.