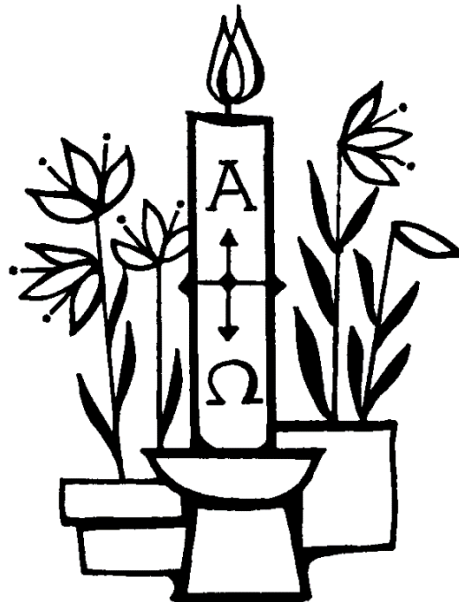


*“I am the resurrection and the life;
whoever believes in me shall live,
and never die....”*

– John 11:25



Funeral Preparation Guide

St. Agnes Catholic Church

2314 3rd Avenue

Scottsbluff, NE 69361

308-632-2541

My friends,

Preparing a funeral is a very emotional event, whether it is for a loved one who has just died or you are pre-planning your own funeral. When a loved one dies, grieving family members and friends are often confronted with dozens of decisions about the funeral, all of which must be made quickly and often under great emotional distress.

This booklet is meant to be a guide to assist and help individuals in preparing a funeral. The funeral is for the living and is intended to assist us in celebrating the life of the person who has died. No one wants to talk about death and funerals -- too depressing, too macabre. Better to gather with friends and talk about sports or the kids. Certainly, this would be more fun. Unfortunately, death is a fact of life, and there simply is no way to avoid it. Indeed, there is *“a time to be born and a time to die”*.

When someone dies, we hold a funeral, a word related to a Sanskrit term meaning “smoke”, which refers to an ancient custom of cremating the dead. Today, although we also sometimes cremate our dead, the most common disposition is to hold a funeral, or another ceremony, and to bury our dead under or above ground. Through a funeral, we pay our last respects and celebrate the life of a departed loved one.

The Catholic Church has rich symbolism and rituals built around this significant event -- rituals and symbolism that are meant to give hope and faith, supported by the consolation of God and the community. There are **three parts** to the Catholic Order of Funerals. The first part, the Vigil, is a prayer service, usually held the evening before the funeral Mass, in which we recognize and realize that we have suffered a loss and gather to say goodbye to the one who has died. The second part, the Funeral Mass, is a celebration of new life for our loved one, a liturgy that is based upon our faith and our hope of the resurrection. The third part is the Committal, during which we bury the one who has died, either bodily or his/her remains.

On **page 22** you will find a sheet for preparing the Vigil Service. One **page 23** is a sheet requesting funeral program details, and on **pages 24 – 25** you will find a sheet for preparing a Funeral Mass/Memorial Mass/Service. On these pages, there are various options available from which you may choose. There are page numbers on these forms that refer you to corresponding page numbers in this packet, which will spell out these options more fully.

It is our hope you will find this booklet useful. If we or our parish staff can be of any help to you in any way, please do not hesitate to simply call and ask for assistance.

God’s peace,

Fr. Rayappa Konka Pastor
(308) 632-2541
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Important Contact Information

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Jeannette Fitzgerald
Karen Koch

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Funeral Homes

Bridgman Funeral Home
2102 Broadway, Scottsbluff

(308) 632-2121

Duggan Kramer Funeral Home
3201 Avenue B, Scottsbluff

(308) 632-4101

