



Funeral Guidelines and Policies

The Rite of Christian Burial is an Easter liturgy in which we celebrate with joy the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and affirm that those who have died in faith will be raised by Christ. It is, first and foremost, a worship service during which we praise God for the promise of the Resurrection. At the same time, this service soberly acknowledges that losing one we love is a source of deep pain. The service is thus marked by paradox—a paradox which often mirrors the complicated emotions of those who grieve.

The clergy and staff at St. Francis in the Fields will walk alongside you as you plan the funeral service for your loved ones. This funeral customary will help provide guidance and will answer many of the commonly asked questions. After you review this document, please contact the Parish Office to schedule a time to meet with clergy to begin planning the service, and to answer any outstanding questions you may have.

Officiants

St. Francis in the Fields clergy officiate all funerals. Visiting priests or pastors may, on occasion, and at the discretion of the Rector, preach or otherwise assist in the service. This invitation must be made by the Rector. Please do not invite another clergy person to assist in the service prior to meeting with St. Francis clergy to plan the ceremony.

The clergy at St. Francis in the Fields have equal responsibility for the care of parishioners. We are unable to accommodate “requests” as to which member of St. Francis clergy officiates funerals.

Types and Location of Service

Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. A service in the church may be followed by a graveside committal. All services at St. Francis in the Fields are held according to the Book of Common Prayer, 1979 (the Prayerbook). There are several types of services available, all of which are sometimes called a “funeral”:

- Rite of Christian Burial: this takes place at the church with the body or ashes are present. It may be followed by a committal at a cemetery or Memorial Garden.
- Graveside Committal: The body or ashes are committed to God’s care at a cemetery or in our Memorial Garden (ashes only). This may be a standalone service or may be part of the Rite of Christian Burial.
- Military or Fraternal Burial: Under certain circumstances, a priest may provide an order for burial in a military cemetery or other location. These services must be according to the Prayerbook. Please speak to a member of clergy for more information.

Please note that the term “Celebration of Life” is not used for services at St. Francis in the Fields

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Date and Time of Service

The Rite of Christian Burial is a communal liturgy, so funerals should be held at a time when the congregation has the opportunity to attend. Funerals are not held on Sundays or during Holy Week (the week preceding Easter).

We recommend that funerals be held on weekdays or Saturdays at 11:00 am or noon. Clergy will consult with you to choose a specific date and time.

Planning the Service

Rite I or Rite II

There are two liturgies for funerals: Burial I and Burial II, one of which is more traditional, and one of which is more contemporary. The clergy can walk through the service with you to help you choose. Both liturgies begin joyfully: "I am the resurrection and the life."

Holy Communion

You will have the option to have Holy Communion as part of the service. It is appropriate to celebrate communion because it is the ritual by which we remember Christ's death and resurrection, but it is not required. Please note that all Christians baptized with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are invited to receive Holy Communion in the Episcopal Church.

Viewing/Visitation

A viewing, vigil, or visitation may be held at the church prior to the burial service, or at another location. Please let the priest know if you would like prayers or other resources for help in planning a vigil.

The coffin is closed before it enters the church for the Rite of Christian Burial and remains closed thereafter. Flowers are removed from the casket prior to bringing it into the church.

Readings

There are generally four readings (Old Testament, Epistle, Psalm, and Gospel) in a worship service, but you may choose to do fewer. A funeral with Holy Communion must include a reading from the Gospel. You may select readings from those offered in the Book of Common Prayer (see list in the planning guide). Readings are generally read by lay people; this can be a great way to include family members in the service.

Music

All funeral music is provided by St. Francis in the Fields musical staff, and all musical choices must be made in consultation with the Director of Music. The Director of Music will help you select hymns and anthems that are appropriate to the occasion and are from approved liturgical



resources. Choirs, instrumentalists, and soloists are available upon request. Solos may be performed as a prelude before the service. The Music Director will select soloists and instrumentalists from among the St. Francis musical staff. More information about fees for the organist and choirs can be found on the attached fee schedule.

Speakers

A priest of St. Francis in the Fields will provide the homily to reflect on the promises of Holy Scripture, and to tell the story of your loved one within the great narrative of God's saving work in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is recommended that friends and family members be given a chance to speak in memory of their loved one at a reception after the service, rather than as part of the liturgy.

If a short remembrance is included in the liturgy, the speaker must provide the priest with a copy of the speech prior to the service, and the speaking time may not exceed five minutes.

Liturgical Assistants

St. Francis will provide and coordinate an acolyte, chalice bearers, and thurifer (if requested). Members of our funeral guild generally serve as ushers. Pall bearers are selected by the family.

Worship Leaflets

St. Francis in the Fields will produce a service leaflet to include the order of the service, hymns, psalms, and readings. You may choose to work directly with a local printer to design and purchase a custom bulletin if you prefer. Please note that all leaflets must be approved by the priest prior to printing.

Livestreaming

St. Francis will make every effort to make livestreaming or a recording of your service available upon request, but it is not guaranteed. Please see the cost for livestreaming on the attached fee schedule. Livestreams from personal webcams, cameras, and cellphone recordings are not permitted in the sanctuary.

Flowers

Two flower arrangements are usually positioned on the flower stands behind the Altar near the Choir. If they are left to be used at the Sunday services, a memorial mention will be made in the Sunday leaflet. Flowers are purchased by the family and cost can vary.



Funeral Fee Schedule

We do not charge for funerals at St. Francis in the Fields, and any voluntary honoraria given to clergy will be used to further their ministry at the parish. You may choose to make a memorial gift to St. Francis in the Fields in honor of your loved one, but this is by no means required. The only fees charged are to cover the cost of hosting the funeral. These include:

- Musical Director: \$300 (planning and playing at the service)
- Custodial: \$40/hour (minimum of four hours) to clean and prepare the church for the funeral
- Singers/Choir/Instrumentalist: Varies; please speak to the music director
- Receptions: There is no cost for using Graves Hall for a reception after your funeral. However, food, flowers, and decorations must be purchased by the family (we can help with recommendations if needed). There is a \$125 cleaning fee for the use of tablecloths.