

2. Charges for funeral goods such as caskets, urns and outer burial containers for caskets or urns.
3. Cash advances for such items as flowers, obituary notices, officiating clergy, musicians, cemetery, crematory or government fees.

Other considerations

Find Support. If the task of organizing is too difficult to handle emotionally, ask someone to help or negotiate for you.

If you have some clear expectations, state them clearly by **making arrangements in advance**. It frees your children from an arduous undertaking at a difficult time. If your tendency is to economize, don't expect your children do that. They are afraid they will look ungracious if it appears to be their choice.

It is important that people understand that it is **not required that burial be in a Catholic cemetery**. Clergy will gladly attend service at public cemeteries. However, a Catholic cemetery is a place of prayer. In Barrie we have a Catholic cemetery that has served the needs of the people for 130 years.

My spouse is not Catholic. Can we buried together? Absolutely, there is no problem with inter-faith families being buried together at St. Mary's. Also it is worth noting that when a non-Catholic family member dies, who has not had strong attachment to another church, it is quite appropriate to ask St. Mary's to assist through providing a funeral.

Are there **regulations about grave markers**? There are, and it is most helpful for all involved that you understand what form of marker is permitted before choosing an area in the cemetery. Remember, a Catholic cemetery is a place of prayer. There should be nothing on a grave marker that you would not



Do Catholics have particular ways of **expressing sympathy**? For centuries Catholics have "had masses said" for the dead. Sometimes these are on a specific date and are called announced masses. More often a mass is offered without a particular date. They are often said by priests in other parts of the world and the funds used in those communities. The donor of the stipend (\$10 for a mass and \$20 if it is announced) sends the card to the family as an act of sympathy and to inform them that a mass is being said.

Choosing a Provider

Funeral Homes provide a broad selection of services, from simple transfer of body to the crematorium to full funeral rites at the funeral home and church.

Transfer services provide a basic service. They may remove the body of the deceased from the place of death, place it in a casket or container, deliver it to a cemetery or crematorium and file necessary documents. They cannot attend or conduct visitations or funerals. They cannot embalm nor do any other preparation of the body.

On Line Guides

Consumer Guide to Funerals

http://www.jjpattersonandsons.com/A_Consumer_Guide_to_Funerals_-57563.html

Funeral Questions and Answers

<http://www.fortunecity.com/campus/french/1056/id59.htm>

Seven Ways To Reduce Costs Of A Funeral Service

http://www.afuneralinbc.com/seven_ways.htm

Associations

The Funeral Service Association of Canada:

www.fsac.ca

The Ontario Board of Funeral Services :

www.funeralboard.com

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church

Arranging a Funeral: What you need to know.

This pamphlet is an initiative of St. Mary's Parish Council to address a number of issues related to funerals. It is designed to help the members of the parish better understand what is expected of them as Catholics and to assure them that they are free to determine what is best for their family as they mark the passing of someone they love.

Death in the Christian Context

When someone dies we seek to honour them, to connect them with the larger community and express our sense of loss.

For the Catholic these traditions are intimately entwined with our belief in the dignity of each person and the promise of eternal life. We as Catholics have over the years developed some very clear expectations for the time of death.

The challenge that the rituals present for many is cost. From a Christian point of view it is a fair question to ask at what point do the expenses involved in funerals and associated rituals contradict the faith that we try to live.

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What you need to know

There are many things to consider when arranging a funeral. No matter what arrangements are made, it is essential that Christian beliefs be reflected in the funeral rites and that care of the body of the deceased and the consolation of the living are priorities.

There are **four key decisions** you will have to make when arranging a funeral.

Decision 1: What will happen with the body of the deceased? Will their body be interred in a cemetery or cremated? If they are to be cremated, will the ashes be interred at a later date?

Decision 2: What type of memorialization do you wish for the deceased?

A traditional Catholic order would involve a day of visitation normally at a funeral home, with parish prayers in the evening followed by a funeral mass the following morning. Interment occurs after the funeral mass.



There can be alternatives:

Visitation may be of a varied length, including a very short period directly before the mass. This can occur for one hour in the church proper before the funeral mass begins. Because of the demands on the church for other liturgies, this time cannot be extended and is only offered when visitation has not taken place elsewhere.

There are cases when visitation is not undertaken at all; this is often indicated for those of very advanced age or who, for whatever reason, do not have a large circle of friends or family. The emotional state of the family may limit visitation as well.

Because of the demands on the church for other liturgies, this time cannot be extended and is only offered when visitation has not taken place elsewhere.

Funeral Mass or Funeral Service? The celebration of the **Mass of Christian Burial**, traditionally called a funeral mass, is strongly encouraged when we mark the passing of any of the faithful. The alternative is a service with a member of the clergy, priest or deacon at the funeral home.

We need to be very careful as a community that we do not get into the habit of seeing the celebration of mass as something we do for “some Catholics”. We welcome the opportunity of celebrating mass to mark the passing of any baptized Catholic.

Decision 3: What kind of casket do I want? What are the expectations on urns?

Caskets vary in price and style. Prices range from a few hundred to several thousand dollars. Caskets do not preserve human remains. Ontario law does not require that a casket be placed in an outer burial container or vault.

When the body is cremated the ashes are returned to the family in a box, wrapped in brown paper. An urn is not required. Often the ashes are interred in the box. If brown paper seems informal it could be wrapped in a piece of the deceased’s clothing. In the church the box is covered with a white cloth.

Decision 4: What is embalming and is it required?

Embalming is the process of replacing blood and bodily fluids with chemical preservatives. It is a process of sanitation, restoration and temporary preservation. Embalming is not legally required in Ontario but may be recommended to preserve the body between the time of death and visitation. Some cosmetic preparation is usually recommended, but that is not embalming.

Cremation: What Catholics should know

In 1983, the Catholic Church lifted its prohibition forbidding Catholics to choose cremation. Canon 1176 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law states: “The Church earnestly recommends the pious custom of burying the bodies of the dead be observed, it does not however, forbid cremation unless it has been chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching.”

When should cremation take place?

Cremation normally takes place after the full funeral liturgy. It may in fact occur earlier for a number of reasons:

1. The funeral with a casket may prove too costly for many people
2. Because of a tragic loss of life, immediate cremation may be indicated.
3. There may be a strong personal preference for cremation immediately after death.

What Catholic rites are available for those choosing cremation?

The essential difference between the rites, if the body is present as opposed to cremated, rest in the understanding that cremated remains are no longer a body. In our parish, before a funeral mass with ashes, the container is placed on a table near the altar and the rite of welcoming is omitted. The ashes are not incensed since this is an act of honoring the body of a deceased. Beyond that, the ritual proceeds as usual including parish prayers, full mass and committal.

What to do with the cremated remains?

Catholics should avoid some of the more current tendencies that have developed in the disposal of the ashes of loved ones. The practice of sprinkling ashes in public places is illegal. The practice of dividing up ashes of family members should be avoided. It is the church’s preference that ashes are interred in the earth or a niche in a cemetery. It is valuable in the process of grieving to have a single focused place to return either physically or mentally as we remember those who have gone before us. St. Mary’s cemetery has niches available for cremated remains as well as provisions for their burial.

Cost considerations

Don’t think making price comparisons is undignified. Ask for a complete and itemized list (including GST) so that you can compare accurately. The items are as follows:

1. Basic service fees for staff, facilities, vehicles, embalming and preparation, documentation, funeral stationary and additional services.