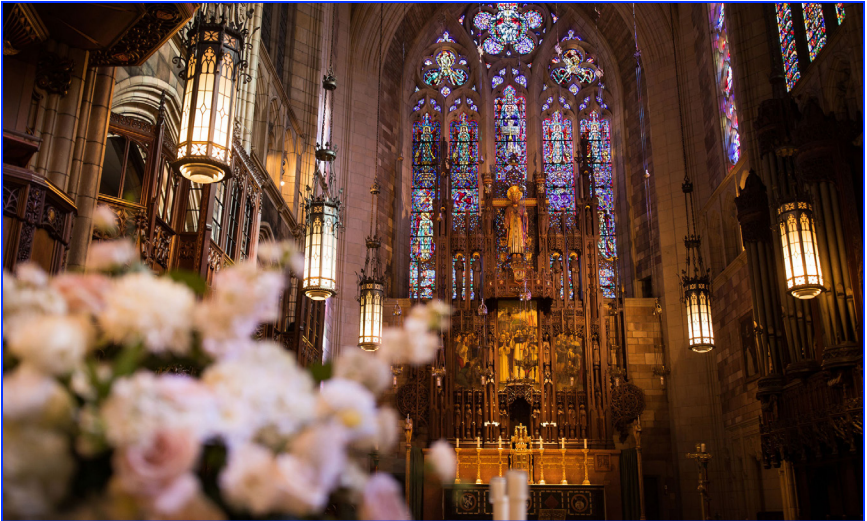




Parish of St. Vincent Ferrer and St. Catherine of Siena



Funeral Rites and Memorial Mass Policy

(Updated: April 2024)

Introduction

The death of a loved one can be a time of many mixed emotions and practical considerations. Through it all, bringing the deceased to the Lord in prayer is helpful both for them and for us. The wake, the Funeral Mass, and the burial are the primary ways to honor the deceased and to entrust them to God's love and mercy. Special Memorial Masses at later dates, particularly on an anniversary or in the month of November, are also beautiful ways to honor them. Through these means, we help the deceased along their final journey of purification so that, one day, they can appear before the Lord with hearts made "white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18). At the same time, entrusting them to God can infuse our own process of grief with His grace.

Making decisions about how to honor the deceased often happen quicker than we would wish. The time between the death of a loved one and the funeral can often be brief, and so we hope the following will provide some guidance. Please know of the prayers of the Dominican community and the staff of St. Vincent Ferrer and St. Catherine of Siena Parish as you reflect on what will be the best way to pray for and honor the dead.

Funeral Rites

FUNERAL MASS AND SPECIAL MEMORIAL MASSES

The Funeral Mass and special Memorial Masses are times of prayer and focus on the reality of death and the final journey with the Lord. While many like to celebrate the life of the deceased, which does have its proper place within the grieving process, Funeral Masses and special Memorial Masses are primarily times of prayer for the deceased so that they can quickly pass-through purgatory to the life of the blessed in heaven. It is important to consider all this when thinking about fitting readings and music.

WAKES AND COLLATIONS

Wakes and collations, that is, communal gatherings before the Funeral Mass or after the burial, respectively, complement those distinct moments of prayer by offering the family and friends a wonderful opportunity to reflect and remember the life of the deceased. This is why the Church encourages family and friends to have a wake before the funeral and/or a collation after the burial. These are also the most appropriate places for a eulogy or for some words of remembrance.

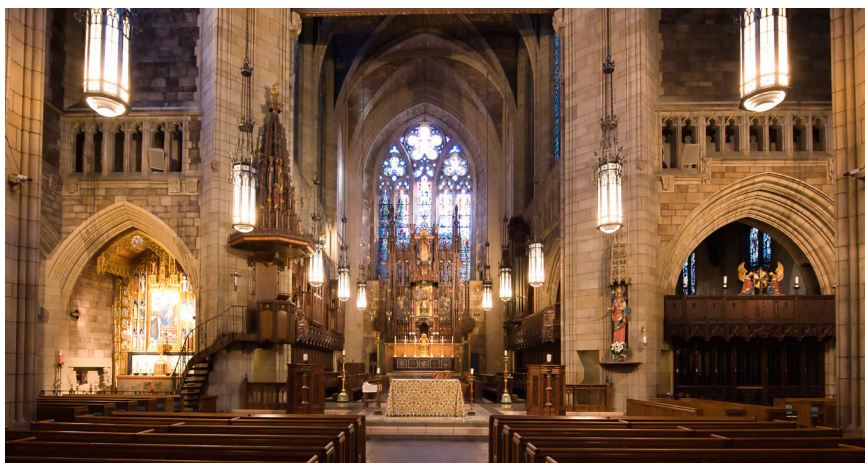
BURIAL

The burial of the deceased is a faith-filled way to profess the Christian belief in the resurrection of the dead. From ancient times, Christians have buried the dead with great respect for the body as a recognition that at the end of time, "God will give incorruptible life to our body, transformed by reunion with the soul."¹ With this in mind, the Church has always held that the appropriate thing to do with the remains of the deceased, whether the whole body

¹ Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, "Instruction *Ad resurgendum cum Christo* regarding the burial of the deceased and the conservation of the ashes in the case of cremation" (2016), para. 2.

(i.e. a burial with a casket) or in the form of cremains, is to bury the deceased in consecrated ground at a Catholic cemetery, or otherwise in a plot blessed by a priest at the time of burial. Scattering ashes or preserving them in jewelry or other objects ignores the reality of the resurrection of the body as well as separates the deceased from a place where the entire Christian community may pray for their peaceful repose, and for these reasons these practices should be avoided.

To have a Funeral Mass in one of the churches in our Parish, we ask that the family have a plan for the proper burial of the remains. If the intention is to do something with the remains other than burying them, then we will not be able to accommodate a funeral.



Church of St. Vincent Ferrer

Preparations for Funeral Rites and Memorial Mass

In preparation for a funeral, we strongly encourage families to make use of all the funeral rites mentioned above. They are all parts of a whole, and together they both offer the best way to pray for the deceased as well as provide the fullest opportunity for the family and friends to have a healthy experience of the grieving process.

WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE

While it is common to hear some words of remembrance at a Funeral Mass, here at the Parish of St. Vincent Ferrer and St. Catherine of Siena, we ask that these words be offered in the context of a wake rather than a Mass. When that is desired, we follow the funeral policy of the Archdiocese of New York, which allows only one person to offer remarks, which cannot be more than three minutes in length. These words should focus on the Christian life and virtues of the deceased, and that the remarks must be sent to the parish priest helping with the funeral at least 36 hours in advance of the wake. Otherwise, they will not be allowed.

When it comes to a Memorial Mass, words of remembrance are not allowed. If on the day of a Memorial Mass you would like to have some remembrance of the deceased, then a collation following the Mass is a perfectly appropriate time to speak of the person's life.

READINGS

For both Funeral Masses and special Memorial Masses, there are proper readings that can be chosen. We are happy to provide the texts of those readings so that the most fitting readings can be selected.

MUSIC

Please contact our Director of Music, James Wetzel, at jwetzel@svsc.info for all questions about the selection of music. He will provide detailed information about your options for selecting music and customizing a leaflet as well as the possibilities for and costs of additional singers and instrumentalists.

Because of the sacredness of the church space and the nature of the Funeral Mass and the special Memorial Mass, no secular music is allowed during the Mass or a wake in the church. However, a wake at the funeral home or a collation would be a wonderful time to share some of the deceased's favorite musical pieces.



Church of St. Catherine of Siena

Some Practical Notes

FUNERAL HOMES

The two funeral homes with whom we most commonly work are:

- John Krtil Funeral Home – (212) 744-3084;
1297 First Avenue, New York, NY 10021
- Frank Campbell Funeral Chapel – (212) 288-3500;
1076 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10028

FLOWERS AND DECORATION

At St. Vincent Ferrer, flower arrangements can be placed in front of the two lecterns, by the Porta Caeli statue near the crossing altar, and/or on the high altar. A small arrangement may also be placed in front of the crossing altar.

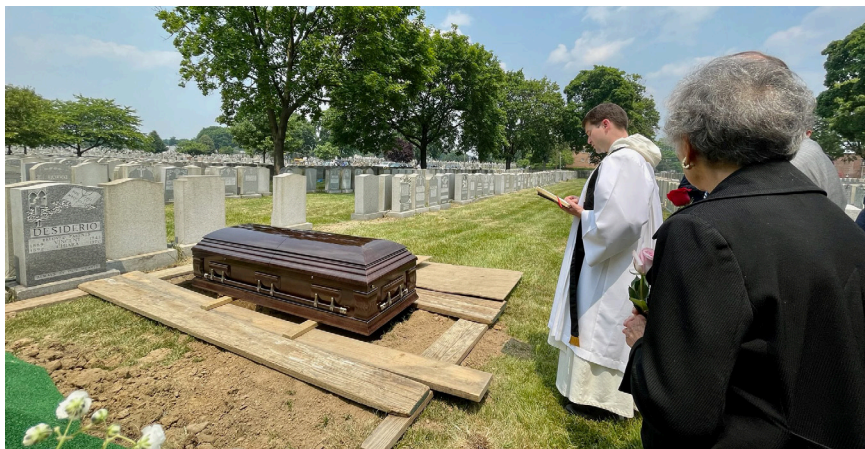
The flowers usually are put up an hour before the Funeral/Wake or Memorial Mass, and there is a custom of leaving some of the flowers in the church to show the connection between the Parish and the departed. Please consult with the priest handling the Funeral or Memorial Mass or with the Director of Music regarding the arrangement and removal of flowers. If it is helpful, the florist can be given a schematic on where flowers can be placed.

IMAGES

You are welcome to have an image of the deceased near the entrance of the church, and it is a common and appropriate practice to place an image near the guest book as people enter the church. Out of respect for the design of Catholic churches and the centrality of the Eucharist, we ask that you do not place images of the deceased near the altar (e.g. next to the casket, urn, or lecterns).

LEAFLETS

We are happy to prepare a leaflet with the readings and music for the Mass. Our Director of Music will be glad to discuss details and options.



COSTS AND FEES

Depending on how you would like to have the deceased prayed for and honored, there are different fees associated with the various rites.²

For those who were active parishioners as well as alums of St. Vincent Ferrer High School, Dominican Academy, and Providence College³:

- Funeral Mass only: \$1,000
- 30-minute Wake (closed casket or urn) and Funeral Mass: \$1,250
- 60-minute Wake (open casket) and Funeral Mass: \$1,500
- Special Memorial Mass: \$500

For those who were not active parishioners:

- Funeral Mass only: \$2,000
- 30-minute Wake (closed casket or urn) and Funeral Mass: \$2,500
- 60-minute Wake (open casket) and Funeral Mass: \$3,000
- Special Memorial Mass: \$1,000

The fees above do include the standard musical rate.

All payments should be made by check to “Parish of St. Vincent Ferrer and St. Catherine of Siena” or online by [WeShare](#).

COMMUNICATION

For clarity of communication, we ask that there be only one point of contact for the family with the Parish.

² Please note that the fees may vary for Funerals and Memorial Masses that involve ecclesiastical and/or secular dignitaries as well as those that entail more preparation than normal.

³ This would be those parishioners who had been regularly attending St. Vincent Ferrer Church and/or St. Catherine of Siena Church up to the point in which they were no longer able to attend Mass in person.

Our Prayers for You

Please be assured of the prayers of the Dominican Friars as you prepare for the Funeral Rites or the Memorial Mass. May St. Joseph, the patron of the dying, and the Blessed Virgin Mary guide your loved one safely to the eternal kingdom of God and grant you great peace and consolation at this time.

In paradisum deducant te angeli; in tuo adventu suscipiant te martyres, et perducant te in civitatem sanctam Jerusalem. Chorus angelorum te suscipiat, et cum Lazaro quondam paupere aeternam habeas requiem.

May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs receive you at your arrival and lead you to the holy city Jerusalem. May choirs of angels receive you and with Lazarus, once a poor man, may you have eternal rest.



Parish of St. Vincent Ferrer
and St. Catherine of Siena

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