

Holy Cross Parish

Words of Remembrance at the Mass of Christian Burial

It is both an honor and a significant responsibility to offer Words of Remembrance at a Mass of Christian Burial. These guidelines are presented to assist you to develop and present these Words of Remembrance in a manner worthy of the memory of the deceased and appropriate within the context of the Mass.

We respectfully request that you follow these guidelines:

- The Words of Remembrance should focus on the quality of the person's life, his/her importance in the life of family and friends, a summary of the kind of person he/she was... This might be illustrated by some brief anecdotes from the person's life, but should not become a "roast" of the deceased. These Words of Remembrance are not a personal message to the family or friends gathered (this is the purpose of the homily delivered by the priest or deacon), but an opportunity to summarize and celebrate the person's life. Within the context of liturgy, the tone should be one of faith and hope.
- The Words of Remembrance should be completely written out. Keeping to the written text and not diverging from it ensures that the Words of Remembrance are presented in a dignified and focused manner and that you do not forget something important that you wish to say about the person.
- The Words of Remembrance are to be no longer than five minutes (600-700 words) and offered by only one person.

These guidelines are presented for a variety of reasons, both pastoral and practical: out of respect for the guests gathered at the Mass and all involved in the Mass of Christian Burial, especially volunteer ministers from Holy Cross Parish, many of whom may have other commitments after the hour-long Mass. These guidelines will ensure that the Mass proceeds smoothly and solemnly, and will be a beautiful ceremony for the deceased as well as for his/her family and friends gathered for the Mass of Christian Burial.