

CATHOLIC READINGS FOR FUNERALS

Catholic readings for funerals incorporate selections from the Old and New Testaments. The Catholic liturgy for a funeral is focused on providing comfort and courage for family and friends who are mourning the death of a loved one. Discuss your preferences with the priest and select biblical passages for the service that will offer consolation and strength to the attendees who are gathered to remember and honour the person who died.

At a Catholic funeral Mass, there are usually three readings from the Bible. These selections are chosen from the Lectionary III or *Order of Christian Funerals*, a guidebook for conducting funerals. The first is a passage from the Old Testament and is usually accompanied by a responsorial psalm. The next is from the epistles which are found in the New Testament, and the third is from the gospels of the New Testament. The Alleluia verses are usually said or sung to acclaim the gospel. The priest or officiant will help you choose the suitable psalms.

Funeral Readings from the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, we have a number of meaningful options for Catholic funeral readings. Examples (with excerpts) include:

- **Ecclesiastes 3:1-11**: "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven; a time to be born and a time to die."
- **Isaiah 40:1-11**: "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God."
- **Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9**: "He will destroy death forever."
- **Daniel 12:1-3**: "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake."
- **Micah 7:7-9**: "Though I dwell in the darkness, the Lord is a light for me."
- **Wisdom 3:1-9**: "The souls of the just are in the hands of God."
- **Wisdom 4:7-14**: "The Righteous One, though he dies early, shall be at rest."
- **2 Maccabees 12:43-46**: "He acted in an excellent and noble way as he had the resurrection of the dead in view."
- **Lamentations 3:17-26**: "It is good to hope in the silence for the saving help of the Lord."
- **Job 19:1, 23-27**: "I know that my Vindicator lives."
- **Sirach 2:1-11**: "For in fire gold is tested."
- **Ezekiel 37:12-14**: "O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise."

Funeral Readings from the New Testament

The New Testament has many poignant Catholic funeral readings. Examples (with passage excerpts) include:

- **Romans 5:5-11:** "Hope is not deceptive, what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us when we were still sinners"
- **Romans 5:17-21:** "Where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more."
- **Romans 6:3-9:** "If we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall live with him."
- **Romans 8:14:** "We wait for our bodies to be set free."
- **Romans 8: 31-35.37-39:** "Nothing can come between us and the love of Christ."
- **Romans 14:7-9, 10c-12:** "Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."
- **Acts of the Apostles 10:34-43:** "Everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins." [Easter Season]
- **1 Corinthians 15:20-28:** "So too in Christ shall all be brought to life."
- **1 Corinthians 15:51-57:** "Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?"
- **2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1:** "What is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal."
- **2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10:** "We have a building from God, eternal in heaven."
- **Philippians 3:20-21:** "He will change our lowly bodies to conform to his glory."
- **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18:** "We shall stay with the Lord forever."
- **2 Timothy 2:8-13:** "If we die with him, then we shall live with him."
- **2 Timothy 4:1-2, 6-8:** "I have competed well, I have finished the race..."
- **1 John 3:1-2:** "Beloved, we are God's children now."
- **1 John 3:14-16:** "We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers."
- **Revelation 14:13:** "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." [Easter Season]
- **Revelation 20: 11-21:1:** "The dead were judged according to what they had done in their lives." [Easter Season]

- **Revelation 21:1-7:** "There will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness." [Easter Season]

Catholic Funeral Readings from the Gospels

The Gospels have a number of appropriate readings for Catholic funeral services. Popular options (with excerpts) include:

- **Matthew 5:1-12a:** "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven."
- **Matthew 11:25-30:** "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."
- **Matthew 25:1-13:** "The bridegroom is here! Go out and meet him".
- **Matthew 25:31-46:** "Come, you whom my Father has blessed."
- **Mark 15:33-39; 16:1-6:** "Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last."
- **Luke 7:11-17:** "Young man, I tell you to get up."
- **Luke 12:25-40:** "Stand ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."
- **Luke 23:33, 39-43:** "Today you will be with me in Paradise."
- **Luke 23:44-46, 50, 52-53; 24:1-6a:** "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit."
- **Luke 24: 13-35:** "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"
- **John 5:24-29:** "Whoever hears my word and believes has passed from death to life."
- **John 6:37-40:** "Everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life and I shall raise him on the last day."
- **John 6:51-58:** "Whoever eats this bread will live forever, and I will raise them up on the last day."
- **John 11:17-27:** "I am the resurrection and the life."
- **John 11:35-42:** "Lazarus, come out"
- **John 12: 23-28:** "If a wheat grain dies, it yields a rich harvest."
- **John 14: 1-6:** "There are many rooms in my Father's house."

- **John 17:24-26:** "I wish that where I am they also may be with me."
- **John 19:17-30:** "Jesus bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

More Suggested Funeral Readings for Loved Ones

Meaningful readings can provide comfort in your grief and help remind you that death is not the end. You can adapt your choices based on your relationship to the person whose life will be honoured at the funeral.

Funeral Readings for a Father

A few readings (with passage excerpts) recommended for a father's funeral Mass include:

- **Wisdom 3:1-9:** "But the souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are in peace."
- **Romans 5:17-21:** "For if by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ."
- **2 Corinthians 5:1:** "For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."
- **Psalms 23:1-3:** "The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul."

Readings suitable for a Mother's funeral Mass include:

- **John 14:1-4:** "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms."
- **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8:** "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance."
- **John 14:27:** "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

Funeral Readings for Baptised Children

Some Bible readings commonly featured in funeral services for children include:

- **Isaiah 25: 6,7:** "The Lord will destroy death for ever"
- **Lamentation 3: 22-26:** "It is good to wait in silence for the Lord to save"
- **1 Samuel 1:27-28:** "'For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition that I made to him. Therefore, I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord.'" And he worshiped the Lord there.
- **Revelation 7:9-10.15-17:** "God will wipe away all tears from their eyes"
[Easter Period]
- **Revelation 21:1,3-5:** "There will be no more death" [Easter Period]
- **Romans 6:3-4, 8-9:** "We believe that we shall return to life with Christ."
- **1 Corinthians 15: 20-23:** "All men will be brought to life in Christ."
- **Ephesians 1:3-5:** "Before the world was made God chose us in Christ."
- **Matthew 11: 25-30:** "You have hidden these things from the clever, and have revealed them to mere children."
- **Matthew 19:14:** "But Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.'"
- **Matthew 18:1-4:** "At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?' And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, 'Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'"

EXTRAS
Old Testament

2 Maccabees 12:43-46 "...he made atonement for the dead..."
Job 19:1,23-27 "...I know that my vindicator lives..."
Ecclesiastes 3.1-8 "...A time to be born, a time to die..."
Ecclesiastes 3.1-15 "...A time to be born, a time to die..."
Wisdom 3.1-9 "...The souls of the just are in the hand of God..."
Wisdom 3:1-6, 9 "...The souls of the just are in the hand of God..."
Wisdom 4:7-14 "The Righteous One, though he die early, shall be at rest..."
Sirach 2:1-11 "...in fire gold is tested....Compassionate is the Lord..."
Isaiah 25:6,7-9 "...he will destroy death forever..."
Isaiah 26:7-19 "...your dead shall live, their corpses shall rise..."
Isaiah 35:1-10 "...Here is your God, he comes with vindication..."
Isaiah 40:1-11 "...Here is your God, Here comes with power..."
Lamentations 3:17-26 "...My portion is the Lord, says my soul..."
Ezekiel 37:12-14 "O my people, I will open your graves and have you rise..."
Daniel 12:1-3 "...the wise shall shine brightly..."
Micah 7:7-9 "...though I sit in darkness, the Lord is my light..."

New Testament

Acts 10:34-43 "...Everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins"
Acts of the Apostles 10:34-36, 42-43 "...Everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins"
Romans 5:5-11 "...We were reconciled to God through the death of his Son..."
Romans 5:17-21 "...through one righteous act acquittal and life came to all..."
Romans 6:3-9 "...if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall live with him..."
Romans 6:3-4,8-9 "...if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall live with him..."
Romans 8:1-11 "...There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ..."
Romans 8:14-23 "...Those who are led by the Spirit of God are Children of God"
Romans 8:31-35, 37-39 "...If God is for us, who can be against us?"
Romans 14:7-9, 10-12 "...This is why Christ died and came to life"
1 Corinthians 2:6-10 "...Eye has not seen, and ear has not heard..."
1 Corinthians 15:12-20 "If there is no resurrection of the dead..."
1 Corinthians 15:20-28 "In Adam all die, so too if Christ shall all be brought to life."
1 Corinthians 15:51-57 "Death where is your victory?"
2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1 "The one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us..."
2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10 "We would rather leave the body and go home..."
Philippians 3.7-14 "...I run toward the prize to which God calls me..."
Philippians 3.20-21(1) "He will change our lowly body..."
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 "If we believe that Jesus died and rose..."
2 Timothy 2:8-13 "Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead..."
2 Timothy 4:1-2, 6-8 "I have competed well, I have finished the race..."
1 John 3:1-2 "Beloved, we are God's children now..."
1 John 3:14-16 "We know that we have passed from death to life..."
Revelation 14:13 "...Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord..."
Revelation 20:11-21:1 "...The sea gave up its dead; then Death and Hades..."
Revelation 21:1-5, 6-7 "...I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem..."

Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12 "The Eight Beatitudes"

Matthew 11:25-30 "come to me . . . and I will give you rest."

Matthew 25:1-13 "Look. The bridegroom comes. Go out to meet him"

Matthew 25:31-46 "Come, you whom my Father has blessed"

Mark 15:33-39 "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Mark 15:33-16:6 "Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last"

Luke 7:11-17 "Young man, I say to you, arise."

Luke 12:35-40 "Be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect..."

Luke 23:33, 39-43 "Today you will be with me in paradise."

Luke 23:44-49 "Father, I put my life in your hands."

Luke 23:44-49 "Father into your hands I commend my spirit"

Luke 24:13-35 "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer..."

Luke 24:13-16, 28-35 "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer..."

John 5:24-29 "Whoever hears my word and believes has passed from..."

John 6:37-40 "All who believe in the Son will have eternal life..."

John 6:51-58 "All who eat this bread will live for ever...."

John 11:17-27 "I am the resurrection and the life."

John 11:21-27 "I am the resurrection and the life."

John 11:32-45 "Lazarus, come out."

John 12:23-28 "If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies..."

John 12:23-26 "If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies..."

John 14:1-6 "There are many rooms in my Father's house."

John 17:24-26 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me..."

John 19:17-18, 25-39 "Jesus bowed his head and gave up his spirits."

Here are other alternate suggestions for appropriate readings:

Old Testament

Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

Song of Songs 8:6-7

Isaiah 35:1-6, 10

Isaiah 41:8-10, 13

Isaiah 57:15-19

Isaiah 61.1-3

Isaiah 65:17-21

Ezekiel 34:11-16

Micah 6:6-8

Zephaniah 3:16

New Testament

Acts 10:34-43

Romans 5:5-11

Romans 5:17-21

Romans 6:3-9

Romans 8:14-23

Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39

Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12
I Corinthians 15:20-23, 24b-28
I Corinthians 15:51-57
2 Corinthians 4:14 -5:1
2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10
Ephesians 3:14-21
Philippians 3:20-21
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
2 Timothy 2:8-13
2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17- 18
1 Peter 1:3-9
1 John 3:1-2
1 John 3:14-16
Revelation 14:13
Revelation 20:11 – 21:1
Revelation 21:1-5a, 6b-7
Revelation 22:1-7

Gospel

Matthew 6:19-23
Luke 1:67-74
John 3:13-17
John 10:11-18
John 10:27-30

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

Requiescat- aeternam-eis-Domine-et-lux-perpetua-luceat-eis

