

FUNERAL RITES

&

CUSTOMS

This document, "Funeral Rites & Customs", was prepared to educate law enforcement agencies about the differences various religions and nationalities follow when death occurs to one of their members. "Normal" or "usual" activities at funerals are NOT included--only exceptions to the norm.

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Concerns of Police Survivors, through the courtesy of Professional Training Schools, Inc., Dallas, Texas, has received permission to condense information from "Funeral Rites & Customs".
Updated with information regarding bagpipes in October 2002.

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Table of Contents

THE AMERICAN MUSLIM FUNERAL	2
THE BUDDHIST FUNERAL.....	2
THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE FUNERAL.....	3
THE EASTERN ORTHODOX FUNERAL	4
THE EPISCOPAL FUNERAL	5
THE HINDU FUNERAL.....	6
THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES FUNERAL	7
THE JEWISH FUNERAL	8
THE LUTHERAN FUNERAL.....	12
THE METHODIST FUNERAL.....	12
THE MORMON FUNERAL	13
THE MOSLEM FUNERAL	14
THE PRESBYTERIAN FUNERAL	15
THE QUAKER FUNERAL.....	16
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC FUNERAL	17
THE AFRICAN AMERICAN FUNERAL	17
THE AMERICAN INDIAN FUNERAL.....	18
THE FAR EASTERN FUNERAL.....	19
THE FILIPINO FUNERAL.....	20
THE HAITIAN FUNERAL.....	20
THE MEXICAN AND CENTRAL AMERICAN FUNERAL	20
THE POLYNESIAN FUNERAL.....	21
THE WEST INDIES FUNERAL.....	22
THE AMERICAN LEGION FUNERAL	22
THE MASONIC FUNERAL	23
THE MILITARY FUNERAL	23
POLICE ORGANIZATIONS	24

FUNERAL RITES

The American Muslim Funeral

American Muslims traditionally have used the services of Jewish funeral homes because many customs are the same. Muslims say Jewish funeral directors understand their opposition to embalming and desire for a speedy burial.

Preparation of the Remains: Embalming is acceptable if the body can't be buried within 48 hours or is necessary for another reason, particularly communicable disease. Muslims have a deep respect for the body. Family members are ideally involved in preparing the body with oils and fragrances. For the unmarried, widowed, or divorced, only women prepare women, and men prepare men. The eyes and mouth are closed, orifices packed, and hands and feet are bound. Then the body is shrouded and placed in a casket. The casket is usually closed. The face is left uncovered by the shroud.

The Funeral: Funerals are usually held at a mosque.

Committal Service: A cemetery is respected ground and graveside services are held. Prayers are said as the casket is being lowered; crying is acceptable, but wailing is not. Grief is viewed as a natural part of life, and a funeral is seen as being for the living.

The Buddhist Funeral

Preparation of the Remains: Embalming is permitted and often chosen by the family as the means of preparing the body. Many Buddhist funerals will include public viewing with an open casket. Should the family choose some type of immediate disposition, the funeral director would prepare the body in the same manner as he or she would prepare the body of any other individual.

Dressing and Casketing: The family will select suitable clothing to be used for the occasion. Families generally select traditional wooden or metal caskets available from the funeral home.

Visitation: The Buddhist visitation period is usually briefer than is typical. Lasting perhaps only a few hours. The casket would normally be open.

The Funeral: The funeral service is usually held at the funeral home and is often a continuation of the visitation period. The monk will choose a member of the family, normally the eldest male, to assist him in conducting the rituals. The casket would

remain open during the funeral ceremony which begins with the monk, normally dressed in a burnt orange robe, placing and lighting three candles on the casket. Using the melted wax to hold the candles in place, the candles will continue to burn throughout the ceremony. The monk and family will participate in a series of chants during the funeral service. A gong-like bell is used periodically during this chanting. One of the unique features of the Buddhist funeral is the preparation of a meal consisting of rice, peas and carrots. This is prepared in the funeral home chapel as part of the service and taken to the cemetery. For the next ten days, a similar meal may be brought to the grave. Some priests use such fruits as apples, oranges and bananas during the funeral service. Incense is also burned during the approximately forty-five minutes the funeral service will last at the funeral home. The pall bearers are normally family members. Friends are designated to "stand in" for a specific family member. The pall bearers will wear white gloves which are furnished by the Temple. **The importance of each family member is also seen by the position which they hold in the funeral cortege.**

The Committal Service: The committal service will normally last about thirty minutes with chants by the monk and the family. Incense is also burned. Flowers are normally placed on the casket at the cemetery. The colors of the flowers indicate the role of the deceased in the family.

The Christian Science Funeral

There are no ordained ministers in Christian Science Churches, instead, practitioners or readers, serve in somewhat the same capacity as a clergyman. To become a practitioner, one must demonstrate the ability to perform works of healing.

Notification of Death: Because of their beliefs in the healing powers of the practitioner and the reluctance to seek medical assistance, notification that a death of a member of the Christian Science Church has occurred will bring about several unique situations. First, it is most likely that the death has occurred in the deceased's home or some place other than a usual medical facility. There will be no attending physician responsible for completing and signing the Certificate of Death. It should, therefore, be called to the funeral director's attention to determine who will be certifying the cause of death and signing the death certificate, prior to making the removal from the place of death. Their preference is for the term "passed on" rather than such words as death and dead. The term "passed on" is used to emphasize the fact that "death does not mark the termination of an individual's life, rather it is only one more phase of the belief that life is material".

Preparation of the Remains: If a traditional funeral service is chosen, with the body present for viewing, the normal embalming and cosmetizing would take place. If the family opts to have a memorial service with the body not present the funeral director may only be asked to prepare the body to the extent necessary for an immediate disposition.

) When it is possible the body of a female shall be prepared for burial by one of her own sex.

Visitation: Whether there is a visitation or not is entirely a family decision, but it is not a frequent practice for Christian Scientists.

The Funeral: There are several key factors which the funeral director will have to be aware of when arranging the funeral. Most importantly, no funerals are held in the Christian Science Church. The funeral is probably most often held in the funeral home, at the gravesite, or other cemetery facility. If the casket is present during the service, it is closed. The officiant for the Christian Science funeral is the practitioner or reader. The main theme of the funeral service centers around the comfort in knowing that death is merely a phase in which the individual leaves the mortal life while maintaining the immortal spiritual life. The service is often preceded by organ music. During the service there is usually an invitation for those present to join in the Lord's Prayer, and the service concludes with a benediction.

The Committal Service: There are no Church restrictions in regards to the method of disposition, with earth burial, entombment, and cremation all being permitted.

) **The Eastern Orthodox Funeral**

It is the "nationalism" or the tendency of the Orthodox Church to take on the characteristics of its people, which may cause the most serious problem in trying to define the Orthodox Church and its practices. The most important factors in determining the type of funeral service held are the customs and traditions the family brings with them into the funeral arrangement conference.

Notification of Death: The necessity of notifying a clergyman and whether there are any religious rites required or performed at the time of death is important to the funeral director. In the case of the Orthodox Church, there are no "last rites" such as those seen in the Roman Catholic Church. Priests may prefer to be notified of an impending death in order that they may conduct a prayer service at that time.

) **Visitation:** It is customary for the family's priest to be present with them during their first viewing. Generally a prayer is offered during this time. In addition to this first prayer, the Trisagion, a series of three prayers, are usually offered at the end of the evening. Similar to a Rosary or Christian Prayer Service in the Roman Catholic Church, the family and friends gather for this service, in which prayers for the deceased are offered. If the visitation and Trisagion are to be held in the funeral home, several pieces of equipment should be placed in the chapel or state room. The Holy Icon, a picture of Christ, is a symbol which can be seen throughout the Orthodox Church. In the funeral home, the Icon is normally placed at one end of the casket, allowing those approaching

the casket to first kiss the Icon. Other items used in conjunction with the Orthodox funeral include candles as well as a crucifix.

The Funeral: The funeral service may be held on any day except Sunday. On the day of the funeral service, the family, pallbearers and perhaps close friends will gather at the funeral home for a Trisagion. Following this short prayer service of five to six minutes, the casket is closed and those in attendance will move in procession. The funeral service, is called the Parastas (a standing service), or Great Panachida, which means "all night service". The funeral service will follow a very liturgical pattern. Organ music and/or a vocal selection may be allowed although it is not normal in the Orthodox Church. Following the service, the casket may be turned so that it is parallel to the Iconostasion, a solid screen, covered with Icons, which separates the sanctuary of the Church from the remainder of the building. The casket is opened at this point, if at all possible, and left open for the remainder of the service. The priest will make the sign of the cross first with olive oil and then with ashes or sand on the chest of the deceased. If the family and friends are going to view the deceased they can file past the casket once again kissing the Icon, which is placed either at the head or foot end of the casket before filing out of the Church.

The Committal Service: The graveside service will consist of a reading and short prayer. In some ethnic groups, the oil and ashes are placed on the top of the closed casket during the graveside service. Incense may be used by some priests at the funeral home, church and graveside. Cremation is forbidden by Orthodox Christians because of the destruction which would take place to the body. The body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit and the church, mindful of this fact, refuses to deliberately destroy the body. A church funeral is denied by anyone who will be cremated.

The Episcopal Funeral

Notification of Death: In the past it was considered essential that a Priest be notified when the death of an Episcopalian had occurred or was expected to occur. Although this may vary today from parish to parish, the funeral director should determine the preferences of the individual priests he or she serves to ensure that the proper procedure is followed.

Visitation: In most cases, visitation will be held at the funeral home. The casket is present and open or closed depending on the wishes of the family. There are no items of religious equipment used during the visitation.

The Funeral: All funerals for Episcopalians should be conducted in the Episcopal Church. The funeral service is very similar to that of the Catholic Funeral Mass. Music may be sung by the church choir and/or the congregation from the Episcopal Hymnal.

) The use of flowers is prohibited in the Episcopal Church, although local customs and the preferences of individual priests may vary.

The Committal Service: The Episcopal Church has no restrictions as to the means of disposition for one of its members. As part of the committal service the priest will read a passage commending the body to the earth, often while sprinkling sand in the shape of the cross on top of the casket. The Lord's Prayer is recited by all in attendance followed by a final prayer said by the priest.

The Hindu Funeral

) Hinduism is a way of life rather than a denomination. Hindus worship many gods. These gods are believed to be different forms of a universal spirit called Brahman. Hinduism centers around karma, which is the belief that every action of an individual will result in either good or bad results. The total of all of these actions is known as dharma, and it is this overall positive or negative way of living during one's present life which the soul will inherit when re-incarnation takes it into the next life. The funeral ceremony is one of celebration and is considered the second most important (and expensive) ritual to take place in a person's life. The preparation of the body, which is done in the home, was traditionally handled by the family with the assistance of "mortuary specialists". After the body was bathed, it was wrapped in linen and decorated with sacred ashes and sandal paste. Normally the body of a married woman would be wrapped in colored cloths and decorated with flowers and jewelry showing her married status. The body is viewed by all who wish to enter the home for that purpose. Prior to removing the body from the house for disposition, it is anointed with oils, soaps and powders. Again the immediate family is responsible for this anointing process. When rituals are completed, the body is carried without the use of a coffin to the cemetery or cremation site. Cremation is the preferred means of disposition. Cremation is a sacrament in the Hindu religion. Hindus believe that the soul never dies, but passes through a series of lives in different bodies. The soul is trapped in the skull and has to be released from the body with the help of fire. Cremation is a religious act and sacred texts are chanted while the body is burned. The oldest male relative walks three, five or seven times around the pyre holding a burning piece of wood and then lights the pyre. When the heat of the fire breaks the skull, the relatives leave the pyre to be tended by professional burners. On the third day, the ashes are collected and taken to a river to be dispersed. This frees the soul allowing it to be reborn in another life.

Preparation of the Remains: Unlike the practice in eastern countries, the family will not be responsible for the preparation of the body in the United States. Here the funeral home will handle the preparation to whatever extent the family wishes.

) **Dressing and Casketing:** The clothing will usually be provided by the family. Many of these individuals still prefer to wear their native clothing. However, the clothing may be

more of a reflection on the nationality of the deceased, rather than on the fact that he or she was Hindu. Generally, the casket chosen is an inexpensive one, whether it be made of metal or wood. One reason, cremation is often practiced and no casket is used. Hindus believe that death is only a transition from one life to another.

Visitation: In a community where there are few Hindu, the visitation and funeralization may take on a very western flavor and be similar to any other such service. If on the other hand there are many Hindu in the area, it might be expected that the visitation and funeralization will take on a more eastern flavor. The visitation period, still held in the funeral home, would most likely be of a shorter duration.

The Funeral: In most instances a Hindu funeral held in the United States will take place in the funeral home. The priest will lead the service which will include prayers and chants. The use of candles and incense may also be observed. While they mourn for this individual, they do not approach death as the final experience to a physical life.

The Committal Service: Since cremation is very much a part of the Hindu custom, it is often the choice for disposition. However, earth burial is also acceptable and used extensively in some areas. The family takes an active role. When the cemetery or crematory is near the location of the funeral service, the family will even lead the procession. The family members will not only carry the body to the retort chamber, but will also place the body inside the chamber and initiate the cremation process.

The Jehovah's Witnesses Funeral

Jehovah's Witnesses' refusal to accept blood transfusions, their refusal to salute the flag of any country, and their claim for exemption from participating in the armed services, are decisions which are based on their literal translation of the Bible and its applicability in today's world.

Preparation of the Remains: Embalming is often the method chosen by the family for the preparation of the remains.

Dressing and Casketing: Decisions as to the clothing to be worn by the deceased and the type of casket to be used are also left up to the family.

Visitation: Visitation and viewing of the body are accepted as part of the normal funeral procedure. The visitation will normally be held in the funeral home and will be similar to most visitation periods held in that community.

The Funeral: The funeral service may be held either in the funeral home or in the Kingdom Hall. The casket would be placed in the usual manner at the front of the funeral

) home chapel or Kingdom Hall and parallel with the seating. There is no formal processional as the casket is generally closed and positioned prior to the service beginning. The use of flowers in the Kingdom Hall is permitted. The use of a recessional will depend on the customs of the area and the preferences of the officiant. The service is simple, with no religious items such as palls, crosses, candles, etc. being used. There are no other participants, such as altar attendants used to assist the designated officiant of the service. A Jehovah's Witness funeral will normally take no more than thirty minutes and is centered around the reading and discussion of scripture. The music used will normally be organ music with no actual singing, and will come from the Jehovah's Witnesses' own hymnal.

The Committal Service: Earth burial and cremation are the two most common means of disposition practiced by members of the Jehovah's Witnesses. The committal service will last only a few minutes with a short scripture reading and a few words spoken by the officiant concluding the service.

The Jewish Funeral

) **History:** The Orthodox, Conservative and Reform (sometimes referred to as the Liberal) Jews each bring with them a number of customs and traditions both in their everyday lifestyle, as well as in the way they honor their dead. The basic differences among these three groups lie in the amount of tradition they continue to practice in their lives today.

Orthodox Jews maintain most of the same traditions that have marked the Jewish religion for the past 3,000 years. The Reform Jews have kept only the moral laws and those which they feel adapt to modern civilization. The Conservative Jews fall somewhere in between, following the dietary laws and the traditional celebrations. Because of some very different practices in regard to the funeral service among these three groups, it may be necessary to devote more time in explaining these differences than has been necessary with many of the other religious bodies.

The Jewish Sabbath (Shabbath) is observed on Saturday. For the Orthodox Jew this day is strictly observed. No business dealings are to be conducted on this day. No work is allowed, no writing, and even travel is forbidden. While the Reformed and Conservative Jews also observe their Sabbath on Saturday, the same restrictions as to work, travel, etc. may not be as strictly observed.

) **Notification of Death:** The Rabbi should be notified if the deceased was an Orthodox Jew. However, if the deceased belonged to the Reformed or the Conservative Jewish synagogues, you might find that the Rabbi prefers to be notified after the removal has taken place.

Making the Removal: There are no restrictions when making a removal of a deceased Reformed or Conservative Jew. However, if the deceased was an Orthodox Jew and the death occurs on the Sabbath (from sundown Friday until sundown Saturday), the removal should not be made until the sun has set on Saturday, marking the end of the Sabbath. Obviously, there are situations in which this Jewish law cannot be honored. In these types of situations, the civil laws would supersede the Jewish laws and the removal would be made. If the death does not occur during the time observed as the Sabbath, then there are no restrictions in place for any of these three groups.

Preparation of the Remains: For the Reform or Conservative Jews, there are usually no religious restrictions concerning the preparation of the deceased, including embalming. However, since some Reformed and Conservative Jews will follow the Orthodox traditions, it is important that the funeral home staff maintain close communications with the family and the Rabbi to prevent unnecessary problems from occurring. If the deceased is an Orthodox Jew, embalming is usually not allowed. The reason for not embalming the body is a religious one. The Orthodox Jews believe that nothing should be done which would delay the return of the body back to the original elements it came from. Exceptions, such as the necessity to transport over a long distance or by common carrier, a lengthy delay between the time of death and the funeral service, or when death takes place on the Sabbath, may make refrigeration of the body or embalming necessary. However, whenever possible, the Jewish law should be followed.

If the deceased is an Orthodox Jew, the role of the funeral director in preparing the deceased is almost non-existent. Once the removal has been made to the preparation room, the funeral director will notify the Rabbi. The Rabbi will then notify the Chevrah Kadisha who will come to the funeral home to prepare the remains. The Chevra, commonly referred to as the "washers" by laymen, are a group of men or women, depending upon the sex of the deceased, who have been trained in the Taharah, the ritual of washing the preparing the body for burial. This ritual includes a physical washing, dressing the deceased in a Tachrichim, a white burial shroud, and placing the deceased in the casket. During this ritual, prayers are also said and a bag of Israel earth is placed under the deceased's head.

Dressing and Casketing the Remains: An Orthodox Jew is dressed in a Tachrichim, a white linen shroud for burial. This shroud covers virtually the entire body with only the face visible. It is, however, customary that even the family not view the deceased after the body has been placed in the casket.

If the deceased died as the result of trauma, any clothing which the deceased might have been wearing and which as a result had blood on them, should be kept and placed in the casket with the deceased. If the deceased were embalmed, the blood should be collected in containers, sealed and placed in the casket with the deceased. This is due to the belief that the blood contains the individual's soul.

) The Orthodox casket is known as an Aron. This casket is made completely out of wood, even to the extent of having pegs instead of nails. Oak and pine seem to be very common. The Star of David or Mogen David, the symbol of new hope for the Jewish people, is usually attached to the lid of the casket.

Reform or Conservative Jews will be dressed in their own clothing. The family is not restricted as to the type of casket they can choose from. The Star of David may or may not be attached to the casket in this case.

Visitation: If the deceased is Orthodox, it is possible that no visitation would be held, or that the time would be only a matter of hours. This is due to the tradition of having the burial within 24 hours from the time of death. The fact that the casket would be closed also decreases the possibility of the traditional visitation as members of other religious bodies think of it. A pall with the Star of David may drape the casket and a Menorah (candelabrum) may be placed at the head of the casket. In some areas, one or two vigil candles may be substituted for the candelabrum. No flowers or music would normally be present. Having a shomrim to watch over the body is still observed. This is an age-old custom of not leaving the body alone prior to the burial. If the body was to be held until the following day, the shomrim would sit with or near the casketed remains all night, reading and reciting prayers.

) If the deceased belonged to a Reform or Conservative congregation, it is possible that a visitation period would be held. In these cases, the deceased would be embalmed, dressed and casketed. The visitation, with an open casket, flowers and music, similar to that of other religions may be held.

The Funeral Service: At one time funerals for the Orthodox were held only in the funeral home or at the gravesite. Today, some funerals are being held in the synagogue. No services are held on the Sabbath (Saturday).

Prior to the funeral service, the family will participate in a ceremony known as K'ria. This custom of rendering or tearing of one's clothes symbolizes one's grief. Today, many families wear a black ribbon, which they will tear instead of an article of clothing. This K'ria is worn for 30 days following the funeral, during a period of mourning known as Shloshim.

The Rabbi, assisted by the Cantor, leads the funeral service, which is generally very brief and is made up of the reading or chanting of psalms, a memorial prayer called the El Mole Rachammim, and a hesped, the eulogy honoring the deceased. No music or flowers are present and no fraternal ceremonies take place. Men attending an Orthodox funeral are expected to wear a yarmulke and many will wear a prayer shawl called the tallith.

) The Conservative or Reform Jewish funeral may also be held at the synagogue, funeral home or gravesite. The Conservative or Reform funeral service cannot be held on Saturday. Unlike the Orthodox funeral, flowers and music may be a part of these

services, although often they are not. If the casket had been open for visitation, it is closed prior to the service beginning. The Rabbi and Cantor lead the service. Men attending the service will generally wear the yarmulke.

The Funeral Procession: In the Orthodox tradition, if the funeral service was held in the synagogue, the funeral procession (levaya) will proceed directly to the cemetery. However, if the service was held in the funeral home, the procession may stop at the synagogue. If this occurs, the funeral coach will pull up to the doors of the synagogue. While the family, friends and pallbearers remain in their cars, the doors of the synagogue and the funeral coach will be opened. The Rabbi and Cantor will have a brief prayer prior to the doors being closed and the procession moving on to the cemetery. This provides the deceased with their last contact with the synagogue. Ordinarily, the procession for Reform or Conservative funeral services does not stop at the synagogue.

The Committal Service: The Rabbi, followed by the pallbearers, may stop several times while on their way to the gravesite. Some orthodox still follow the practice of lowering the casket into the grave using the handstraps rather than any type of mechanical lowering device. While earth burial or entombment are the primary modes of disposition, in some cases cremation may be allowed by the Conservative or Reformed Jewish religions. The Orthodox Jews use only earth burial.

Periods of Mourning: A unique characteristic of the Jewish religion as it relates to death is their observance of several periods of mourning. Each of these time periods require the family of the deceased to refrain from certain activities:

Shiva: The Shiva marks a seven day period of intense mourning beginning on the day of the burial. During this period of time, the family members are encouraged to stay away from work or school, to remain at home, and to contemplate the meaning of life and the manner in which adjustment will be made to the death of the beloved. The mourners are discouraged from any act which will call attention to themselves, even to the extent of covering all of the mirrors in the home. The family will often sit on Shiva stools, which are low to the ground, in order to humble themselves while they contemplate life following the death of a loved one. Services are to be conducted in the morning, afternoon and evening during this time and a Shiva (7 day) candle burns throughout this period.

Shloshim: The Shloshim mourning period is a thirty day period in which the mourners begin a return to their normal routine, with the exception of attending any type of entertainment or social functions. The family continues to wear the K'riah, but the services held in the home during Shiva are now replaced with the daily recitation of the kaddish, a Jewish prayer recited at the daily service and by mourners after the death of a relation, at the synagogue.

Shanna: Those who are mourning the loss of an immediate family member continue their mourning period for eleven months after the Shloshim. During the Shanna the

attendance at daily services to recite the kaddish continue as well as the abstaining from celebrations during that year.

Yahrtzeit: The Yahrtzeit commemorates the anniversary of the death. Each year on that date, the kaddish is recited. The Jewish community places great emphasis on their duty to assist the family not only in the burial, but also in the recovery from their loss through the various mourning periods.

The Lutheran Funeral

Dressing and Casketing: The decisions as to the clothing to be worn and the type of casket to be used are left up to the family.

Visitation: In most cases, the visitation will be conducted at the funeral home. The open casket is the focal point, with the flowers, music and friends completing the memory picture. There are generally no services held during the visitation period.

The Funeral: Traditionally, the Lutheran funeral service was held in the church. Today, there seems to be a shift away from the church funeral in favor of the funeral held at the funeral home. The use of the cross, candles, and altar are still very much a part of the Lutheran service. In most cases when a funeral service is held in a Lutheran Church, the casket will be closed for the funeral service. To view the deceased, it is a common practice to have the casket open before the service in the narthex.

The Committal Service: As part of the Committal Service, the Pastor will sprinkle sand, earth or flower petals in the shape of a cross on the top of the casket as he notes the return of the physical body back to the elements from which it came. The Lutheran Funeral Service is a simpler version of the Catholic Funeral Service.

The Methodist Funeral

Dressing and Casketing: The choice of clothing the deceased is to wear as well as the type and style of casket will generally be selected either prior to or at the time of death by the family.

Visitation: In most instances, visitation will take place in the funeral home. Flowers are accepted and enhance the visitation environment.

The Funeral: The location of the funeral will in most cases have very little effect on the actual funeral service. The use of candles, crucifix, and similar religious equipment would not be used. The funeral service is normally short, lasting no more than thirty minutes in most cases. The celebration of Holy Communion is normally not a part of the service. Prayer, scripture reading, music and the eulogy make up the traditional service.

The Committal Service: Earth, sand or flower petals may be used as part of the committal service, as the minister commends the body to the earth and back to the elements from which it came.

The Mormon Funeral

The largest body of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the "Mormons", are headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah, and number over four million members in the United States. (The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, not a part of the Mormon Church, headquartered in Independence, Missouri, claims over two hundred thousand members.) The Mormons do not recognize professional clergy among their ranks. Those who take up this calling serve for unspecified periods of time and without compensation. One of the unique characteristics of the Mormons is the involvement of the young men and some young women in Church missionary service for a period of up to two years each.

Dressing and Casketing: Decisions as to the clothing to be worn by the deceased and the type of casket to be used are left up to the family. A deceased Mormon who has previously participated in Temple Ordinances, which is an instructional process within the Church, would usually be dressed primarily in special Temple clothing. Otherwise, their clothing will be chosen by the family.

Visitation: Visitation could be held in a Church ward chapel, the family residence, or the funeral home. No special services are held during this time.

The Funeral: The funeral service for a deceased Mormon will generally be held in a Church ward chapel, the funeral home, or at the cemetery as the family prefers. The Church attempts to follow the wishes of the family as to the type of service they would like, but the funeral service follows the same format as the other Church meetings. A viewing may be held immediately before the service in an adjoining room; however, the casket should be closed before being placed in the main chapel and remains closed for the funeral service and is not opened afterwards.

The Committal Service: The Mormon Church prefers earth burial as the method of disposition for its members in the United States, although entombment in a mausoleum is permissible. (The primary difference in the area of funeralization of a member of the Reorganized Church is the allowing of cremation as a method of disposition.)

The Moslem Funeral

The Moslem religion means "submission to God" and those who have accepted the teachings of Mohammed have embraced that saying. Black Muslims are not recognized by the Moslems as true followers of Mohammed.

Notification of Death: The funeral director is not expected to notify the Islamic religious leader at the time a death occurs. Members of this community spend time reading to the dying person.

Making the Removal: The removal is no different than the removal of any other deceased. The civil laws and regulations governing the facility in which the person died make up the basis for determining the removal. While there are instructions to the family in the Koran as to the positioning of the deceased after death, the funeral director may or may not find that these instructions have been followed.

Preparation of the Remains: Generally, after the deceased is removed from the place of death, the body is taken to the funeral home where the funeral home staff will, with the permission of the family, embalm the body. After the body is embalmed, and just prior to the visitation period and funeral service, members of the family will come to the funeral home where they will wash the body. This ritual of bathing the deceased is known as Ghusl. According to the Koran, the steps in the bathing of the dead include:

1. Washing the private parts of the dead three times, using a new piece of cloth each time;
2. Washing the mouth of the dead with a piece of unused wet cloth;
3. Cleansing the nostrils with a piece of unused wet cloth;
4. Washing the face of the dead;
5. Washing the right hand then the left hand;
6. The ma-sah is performed;
7. Washing the right foot then the left foot;
8. Washing the entire body from head to foot.

Dressing and Casketing: Once the deceased has been washed, the family (or funeral home staff) will dress the individual by wrapping them in muslin material. Several pieces of this white cotton material are used to encompass the body so that only the face and hands of the deceased are visible when completed. The casket is usually the simplest wooden casket available, including the cloth-covered woods. The use of a casket in a Moslem funeral is unique to the United States. In other countries, the dead are buried in the white muslin material they are wrapped in without a casket.

Visitation: The visitation period is usually restricted to one hour. All of the family are in attendance during this time and the casket is open. This would normally be held at the funeral home.

The Funeral: Most Moslem funerals are conducted at the cemetery. Funerals may be held on any day except Holy Days. The casket is carried by the male members of the family only and is placed as much as fifty feet from the actual place of interment. The casket is placed north and south with the head toward the south and facing east. The casket is opened for the funeral service, which will take approximately twenty minutes. The funeral prayer is called the Janaazah Namaaz. All prayers to Allah are done in public by the men only.

The Committal Service: At the conclusion of the funeral service, the casket is lowered into the grave. If the cemetery is a perpetual care cemetery, a concrete grave liner is most likely used. If the cemetery is not a perpetual care cemetery, a series of wooden timbers may be placed around the casket. Once the casket is lowered into the concrete grave liner, the cap of the casket is removed and the lid of the grave liner is put in place. The cap of the casket is then placed on top of the concrete grave liner. If final disposition is to be cremation, the male members of the family will place the deceased in the retort chamber. Women are instructed to mourn for four months and ten days. During that time they are to dress plainly and are forbidden to participate in any type of entertainment. Men are instructed to mourn for only three days.

The Presbyterian Funeral

Dressing and Casketing: The physical preparation of the body would conclude with the dressing of the deceased, generally in their own clothing or in clothing purchased by the family. The casket would be a decision of the family without influence or restrictions from the Church.

Visitation: A visitation period is normally held prior to the funeral service with the various decisions such as location, hours and any services to be held in conjunction with the visitation to be determined by the family. Auxiliary services such as a Masonic Service may be held during a portion of the visitation.

The Funeral: There are no restrictions as to the day on which a funeral service may be held. It is suggested that the casket be closed during the service and that the casket be covered with a pall. With strong emphasis placed on the Resurrection in the Presbyterian Church, a plain cross instead of a crucifix is used. The funeral service would begin with the reading of scripture, followed by the singing of hymns, additional scripture, a sermon, the reciting of the Affirmation of Faith and the closing of the service with the saying of prayers.

The Committal Service: The actual time of the committal service is very brief. The service will usually consist of a scripture reading, words committing the body to the earth as well as to the care of God and a closing prayer.

The Quaker Funeral

The Friends General Conference is the group whose practices are most often identified as Quakers. Quakers worship in an environment of silence. The congregation is divided with men and boys on one side of the "Meeting House" and women and girls on the other side, with no minister, but an "overseer" to lead the worship. The Friends United Meeting have ministers who lead the worship service and congregational singing. An observer would probably believe that they were in a typical Protestant Church. The primary difference between this group of Quakers and most Protestant churches is in the observance of sacraments. The Quakers believe in the baptism of their members but do not use water. They also refrain from using the traditional elements of bread and wine in observing Holy Communion, opting instead for an individual and "spiritual communion" with God.

Preparation of the Remains: A simple funeral service with the body present is appropriate. In most cases the body would be prepared through the normal embalming procedures. There are no Church restrictions or requirements as to the preparation of the remains.

Dressing and Casketing: The choice as to the type of clothing the deceased is to wear and the type of casket to be used are left entirely up to the family.

Visitation: The visitation is usually scheduled at the funeral home. There are no special services held during the visitation period. The use of music and flowers are generally acceptable. The decision as to whether the casket is to be opened or closed during the visitation period is left up to the family.

The Funeral: The funeral service is very similar to many of the Protestant churches' funeral services. There are no religious symbols, such as crosses, crucifix, or candles. Nor are altar attendants used in a Quaker service. Flowers would be acceptable and are generally present. The casket may be opened or closed depending on the wishes of the family and the practice of the church. The funeral would consist of prayer, music, scripture readings, a eulogy, and the minister's message or sermon. The funeral service would normally last no more than half an hour.

The Committal Service: There are no guidelines or church preferences as to the method of disposition. The committal service consists of scripture reading and prayer. No

symbolic rituals such as making the sign of the cross with flower petals or sand takes place.

The Roman Catholic Funeral

Notification of Death: The “Last Rites” are given to individuals of the Roman Catholic Church who may be facing imminent death or who have in some instances already died. The need for a priest to administer this ritual of preparing the soul for eternity necessitates the informing of the priest prior to the time of death or at the time of death. Usually this is taken care of by the family or, in some cases, the staff of the hospital, nursing home or other health care institution the individual may be receiving care in at the time of their death.

Visitation: On each end of the casket, candles should be placed. A crucifix is placed behind the casket and a kneeling bench is placed in front of the casket. A Rosary or Christian Prayer Service is usually held at the funeral home the night before burial.

The Funeral Mass: The Mass of Christian Burial for adults and Mass of Angels for a child are generally held in the Church. There are certain “Holy Days” on which a funeral mass may not be conducted. You will also find that a funeral will not be held on Sundays. Secular symbols such as national flags or insignias of other associations should be removed prior to entering the Church and replaced when leaving the Church. Religious symbols such as a crucifix, rosary beads, or a Bible may be placed on the Pall during the Mass.

The Committal Service: Not only will the priest who celebrates the funeral mass go to the cemetery, but the altar attendants may also be included. The committal service at the cemetery will begin with a processional from the automobiles to the grave space. The committal service will include prayers, scripture and liturgical readings and the blessing of the casket for a final time.

ETHNIC/NATIONALITY RITES AND RITUALS

The African American Funeral

Their community gathers in anticipation of the death to support the dying person as well as to muster collective support (emotional, financial) for the survivors. Vigils, wakes, funerals and post-funeral events are important traditions. The more important, honored,

) and esteemed the deceased, the larger the gathering of mourners. The hardness of survivors underscores the importance of social support systems as a critical resource in the adjustment and survival of grief, trauma and loss.

Dressing and Casketing: According to transcendence view, it is the responsibility of the living to carefully and respectfully care for the dead. Close kin are given the honor of assisting with burial preparation (preparing the body, making the casket, digging the grave). Because a natural appearance and likeness of the loved one create less trauma for survivors, the reputation of the funeral home became dependent upon the funeral director's skill in restoring the likeness of the loved one, pricing, services and care of the remains. African-Americans prefer to use African-American funeral directors.

) **The Funeral:** African-American funerals are often delayed for several days after the death until family and friends gather. Funerals in the African-American subculture have come to represent a posthumous attempt to achieve dignity and esteem denied and limited in a culture where people often are treated with minimal respect. Funerals attempt to affirm one's self and achieve some measure of positive self-identify, if only posthumously. The funeralization process and rituals, as well as final disposition, are important in honoring the soul of the deceased. The belief in transcendence to the spiritual world is commonly held. Since they mirror death as an integral part of life, they reflect attitudes that are more "death accepting" than Western culture. They practice a "homegoing service", i.e. passing babies over the casket and naming a baby after a departed love one. These ceremonies may go on for hours. Most traditional African-American funerals are officiated by African-American clergy in churches. African-American funerals tend to be spontaneous and lengthy. Emotionalism of African-American funerals supports evidence that cathartic release and externalization of feelings is more healthy and beneficial to grief recovery than suppressing feelings. African-Americans believe in the value of the responsible care of the dead and regard funerals and "primary rituals" worthy of considerable personal and monetary investments.

The Committal Service: Most African-Americans prefer ground burial.

The Native American Funeral

The Native American Funeral can vary greatly between tribes, villages, and clans. Many Native Americans have given up their funeral rituals to simply follow other religious beliefs addressed in this document. The following is an example of funeral concerns for a clan within the Hopi tribe.

Preparation of the Remains: Embalming is not often necessary; however, a medicine man or woman is notified to do a cleansing of the body. It is custom to have the body buried as quickly as possible, always before the third day following the death.

Dressing and Casketing: Decisions as to the clothing to be worn by the deceased and type of casket to be used are left up to the family.

Visitation: Visitation varies from village to village, as some clans do not believe in holding a wake.

The Funeral: Traditionally, no funeral service is held.

The Committal Service: Ceremonial hair washing is done by the deceased's aunts at the gravesite. This is done by stroking the hair of the deceased with the mother corn or white corn. Preparation of the gravesite is done by male relatives and the body is placed in the chamber by four or five male relatives. On the fourth day following the death, a male of the tribe places food and prayer feathers on the grave. The food symbolizes energy needed for the deceased's journey to the after-life and the prayer feathers assure the deceased a safe journey.

The Far Eastern Funeral

While most groups of immigrants settle in cities, *The Hmongs*, a group of people displaced by the conflicts in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, are a notable exception. Their agricultural background has led them to some unusual immigrant destinations: Wausau in central Wisconsin, for example.

Preparation of the Remains: Hmongs would prefer the body not be embalmed.

Visitation: Two nights of visitation is preferred.

Dressing and Casketing: Family members dress the body. Six to twenty survivors will come to the funeral home for dressing the body and ceremonial wailing. They may bring a 50-gallon oil drum with a shower curtain stretched taut across the top on which they beat from morning until night. The tone of the drum may suddenly change and then liquor is offered to select people. A glass of liquor may even be placed in the casket should the deceased get thirsty on the way to see his or her ancestors. A survivor dances under a tripod while playing a large reed horn. Artifacts may be placed around the casket.

The Funeral: Service may be held at any time, preceded only by an announcement that the family is ready to proceed. Slaughtering of animals is part of the tradition.

The Committal Service: Closing of the grave is sacred to Hmongs. After burial, they return to their homes.

The Filipino Funeral

The Funeral: Funeral services are typically Roman Catholic combined with ethnic traditions. Ceremonies typically last several days. Filipinos do not enter the chapel unless a funeral director accompanies them.

The Committal Service: Lowering of the casket is always witnessed. To signify the passing of generations, the youngest child in the family is sometimes handed across the grave. Many photographs and/or videotaping of the funeral services and burial are taken to prove to those unable to attend that a loved one was given a proper service.

The Haitian Funeral

The Funeral: Haitians may have to have the body “held” for many days while family, friends, and money are gathered for the funeral. This may also be a necessity to obtain visas for family members that are out of the country. Haitians also remember the dead and have a strong sense of their ancestors. They believe the dead speak to them in dreams and that they, therefore, must have a proper funeral. Haitians never expect death, even suspecting foul play when an old person dies of natural causes. Even though death is unexpected, death is a part of daily living for Haitians and their extended families. Upper class Haitians mourn just like Anglos, and poor Haitians from rural areas are very emotional. They cry loudly, are demonstrative, pass out, and even throw themselves at the coffin.

The Committal Service: Haitians wait at the cemetery until the last shovel full of dirt is thrown. They always fear the funeral director may steal the casket so they may jump on it to dent it up at the last minute. The emotionalism is also part of their grief resolution. Santeria or voodoo customs are common among Haitians.

The Mexican and Central American Funeral

Among Mexicans, death is culturally viewed as punishment; religiously it is viewed as rebirth. Culturally, Mexicans believe that in the afterlife they have the ability to observe what is occurring in this world; religiously, they view death as a union with God. Ceremonies are usually Roman Catholic.

Dressing and Casketing: The body of the deceased is the focal point of the funeral. The casket is open, there is little cremation, and organ donation is rare. Viewing is a must, and the body is dressed in the best, new clothing. Mexicans are very aware and comment on the quality of the casket.

Visitation: The visitation and funeral is a three-day affair. Anything less would be a breach of social convention.

The Funeral: The funeral is usually at a church. The immediate family is closest to the grave with the extended family nearby. A week-long recitation of rosaries is common as well as anniversary observances. The family can consist of many, many people. Paperwork may be needed to get three-day visas to come to the United States for the funeral. The key to arrangements is to contact the consulate of that country for instructions. Mexican immigrants traditionally resist prepayment plans since they feel death will be brought closer. There is increased emotionalism, more emphasis on family, and more direct help from friends.

The Committal Service: Friends may actually dig the grave, do housework or prepare food for the bereaved. Santeria, the practice of a type of voodoo, may follow a traditional service in a funeral home. This is marked by special salsa music performed by musicians wearing tuxedos with long coats, gloves, and sunglasses.

The Polynesian Funeral

Polynesian beliefs are a mixture of Protestant Christianity blended with Polynesian nature-oriented practices. All aspects of their lives are influenced by the tribal structure of their society.

Dressing and Casketing: Following a series of family meetings, the first Samoan service will feature the dressing of the body by women of the tribe. Customs include draping the casket or surrounding it with fine mats of hand-woven grass or leaves, and placing prized family possessions in the casket. The body is covered with a veil, a tradition followed by the need to keep off insects in Samoa.

The Funeral: There is typically a week to ten day wait between the time of death and the burial so that all members of the family and tribe can attend. There will be an informal family service. Music is very important to the Samoans. More structured ceremonies called laeos follow with ministers and representative of other tribes participating.

The Committal Service: Before the casket is closed, the spouse or oldest child puts perfume over the body. Samoans feel they must witness the actual burial. They throw flowers while singing. A funeral is not always a mournful occasion for them.

The West Indies Funeral

In the last twenty-five years, Florida's West Indian population has swelled.

Making the Removal: An unusual Cuban custom is called an all night repose, traditionally arranged to assure that the person is actually deceased. This custom has been modified in the United States, and now some reposes only last until midnight.

The Funeral: Cubans want traditional funerals with metal caskets and lots of flowers. Everyone goes to the cemetery. Cubans insist on staying at the cemetery until the vault is sealed and the grave is filled in. Puerto Ricans are also more apt to take children of all ages to funerals than are Cubans. Jamaican funerals are barely distinguishable from those of native-born Americans.

The Committal Service: There has been a gradual increase in the acceptability of cremation.

MILITARY/FRATERNAL RITES

The American Legion Funeral

The American Legion involvement in a funeral service is generally limited to those events following the dressing and casketing of the remains.

Dressing and Casketing: The only consideration which might affect the dressing of the deceased would be the wearing of American Legion clothing.

Visitation: A flag will usually be present, either on the casket over-folded and displayed nearby. If the deceased is not dressed in an American Legion uniform, the hat or other signs of membership may be displayed.

The Funeral: In most cases the American Legion service is conducted at the graveside. A total of twenty-one individuals are used in the American Legion funeral. Following the

service, the playing of taps and the twenty-one gun salute would take place. The funeral home staff should be prepared to participate in the folding of the flag.

The Masonic Funeral

Dressing and Casketing: Normally a white lambskin apron, symbolizing membership as a Mason, is placed on the deceased. A sprig of evergreen is also usually fastened to the lapel of the deceased's coat.

Visitation: The funeral director will need to schedule the Masonic Funeral Service during some portion of the visitation period. The religious officiant will want to separate the Masonic Service from the religious portion of the funeral service.

The Funeral: It is important that the funeral director be aware of these preferences and establish a good rapport with not only the clergy but also the leaders of the fraternal organizations to ensure a smooth and meaningful funeral service for the family. If the funeral service is to be held at the funeral home, the religious funeral service will be held first with the Masonic service following thereafter. If the funeral service is to be held in the church, you will most likely find the Masonic service held at the cemetery.

The Committal Service: Members will wear white gloves, their white lambskin aprons and a sprig of evergreen on their lapels. The white lambskin apron worn by the deceased may be left in place or may be placed on the casket during the service. A minister representing the deceased's religious denomination will normally have a scripture reading and prayer before turning the remainder of the service over to the Masons.

The Military Funeral

Eligibility and availability of the appropriate military funeral detail and status (retired or active) of the deceased play major roles in the funeral. Some may not be entitled to a military funeral, but will be eligible for such benefits as a United States flag, a government headstone, or burial in a National Cemetery.

Eligibility: A complete or graveside military funeral service is available for any active member of the armed forces. If the deceased was no longer an active member, the family would need to contact the branch of service the deceased had belonged to and request that a full or partial military service take place. The funeral director will be responsible for working with the military funeral detail to coordinate the funeral service.

Preparation of the Remains: The military would play no role either in determining the extent or the method to be used in preparing the deceased. If, on the other hand, the funeral director is preparing a deceased on behalf of the armed forces, especially by means of a military contract, the stipulated embalming requirements should be closely followed.

Dressing and Casketing: It is possible that the dressing and casketing of the deceased, could come under the auspices of the mortuary affairs unit of the armed forces. If the deceased was still on active duty, the deceased would be dressed in his or her military uniform and placed in a casket provided by the government. If the deceased was a veteran, the task of dressing and casketing the remains would generally fall to the funeral director. The funeral director would be responsible for dressing the deceased in the clothing provided for or chosen by the family and placing the deceased in the casket.

Visitation: One noticeable difference for an active member of the armed forces would be the representatives from that branch who would serve as an honor guard during the visitation period. The presence of a United States flag would also serve to remind all who attend the visitation of the deceased's service to his or her country. The flag would be used to drape the casket when it is closed. For the open casket, the flag covers the bottom portion of the casket or it can be folded into a triangle and displayed in the head panel or on a nearby pedestal.

The Funeral: The full military funeral could be held at the funeral home, the deceased's place of worship, a cemetery chapel or even a public facility such as an auditorium or similar type of building. A full military funeral service will combine the religious and fraternal with the military service.

The Committal Service: The military funeral detail may include: the band, escorts, consisting of a bugler and members of the firing party, a chaplain, casket bearers and members of the color guard. The chaplain will proceed with the scripture readings and prayers. The service includes the twenty-one gun salute, the playing of taps and the folding of the flag. The military funeral concludes with the flag being presented to a member of the family by the commander of the military detail.

POLICE RITUALS AND CUSTOMS

BAGPIPE MUSIC: One of the time-honored views the public identifies the fallen police officer with are the bagpipes. Although the bagpipes are more known as an export from Scotland, the Irish transformed the bagpipes into an Irish-American tradition and a public safety tradition.

In the middle ages, the bagpipes were a revered musical instrument played in both Scotland and Ireland and they were used to rally the troops into battle, usually against the British. The fighting factions in Celtic lands used the bagpipes to assemble the troops just as the United States Cavalry used the bugle. The English outlawed the bagpipes in Ireland (1366) and declared them an "instrument of war". Anyone caught playing the bagpipes or harp was put to death. The bagpipes were also used during the funeral ceremonies when burying their fallen countrymen.

In the early days in America when a police officer or firefighter was killed in the line of duty, the Irish forefathers within these departments ensured that their fallen brothers were buried with full honors. In keeping with Celtic tradition, the Irish in America would play "the pipes" to bury their fallen. Today, that tradition transcends ethnic, racial and religious lines and the bagpipes are played at most police and fire funerals. With more than 25% of the names on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial being of Irish descent, the Irish have made the playing of the bagpipes a part of the fabric of America and bagpipes are institutions in many police and fire departments across the United States.

BLACK BANDS OVER BADGES: Black arm bands were worn as a symbol of mourning for hundreds of years and we believe law enforcement simply adopted that ritual as well. The black band over the shiny gold badge was a very noticeable symbol of mourning when a police officer died. The usual length for wearing this mourning symbol is 30 days. (It is suggested this be a "thin, elastic band" so the shield number can still be seen by the general public.)

BLACK SHROUDS OVER DOORWAYS OF POLICE BUILDINGS: People used to shroud their home doorways when a family member died. This custom, too, we believe was simply adopted by law enforcement. Again, this mourning symbol can be displayed for a 30 day period.

FLAG-DRAPED COFFIN: While this rite is supposedly reserved only for persons who have served in the military, many police departments drape officers' coffins with the American flag since we know law enforcement protects our citizens on our home lands. *It is truly a heartfelt show of concern for the surviving family if two American flags can drape the coffin and one is presented to the surviving spouse with the other being given to the surviving parent(s).* While it is customary that only one flag be presented at the burial, there is nothing keeping an agency from presenting a second flag at another time to other family members.

Additionally, flags that have flown over the United States Capitol in Washington, DC, are available through your Congressional representatives. You may request a flag to be flown over a specific day and a certificate will accompany that flag stating it was flown over the Capitol for the purpose you requested; i.e., "This flag was flown over the Capitol of the United States in memory of Officer James Smith who was killed in the line of duty on October 12, 1996."

FLY OVERS WITH HELICOPTERS OR AIRPLANES: Fly-overs are again a military funeral salute to their fallen. Normally used at funerals where the officer was a helicopter/airplane pilot or a member of a SWAT team that used their air vehicles, this ritual was again adopted from the military.

HONOR WATCH: Out of a show of respect for the fallen, law enforcement agencies have stood 24-hour watch over their dead just as military have. With large majorities of military-trained personnel leaving the service and becoming police officers, this is another adopted custom from the military.

LOWERING OF FLAG: The American flag is usually lowered for a 30-day period when a government official dies. Again, law enforcement has adopted this ritual since the profession believes it serves as the last defense between chaos and order.

Federal legislation allows the American flags on all government buildings to be lowered on May 15th of each year, National Peace Officers' Memorial Day. Some states have also passed this same bill to allow State flags to be flown at half staff on May 15th.

21-GUN SALUTE: Again, a ritual of the military, we believe law enforcement took on this ritual believing there is a "war" against crime.

RIDERLESS HORSE/MOTORCYCLE: Again, another borrowed military ritual that probably goes back to Civil War times.

TAPS: Again, another borrowed military ritual.

PRESENTING OFFICER'S GUN TO SURVIVING FAMILY: Knowing that many times the only immediate backups an officer has are his ability to talk himself out of trouble or his weapon, it has become custom with some police departments to present the officer's service revolver to the surviving family. It is suggested that the weapon be altered so it is unable to fire but so that it is also repairable.

Several police organizations have rituals that include prayers during the wake and at the cemetery. Check with the surviving family to see if they are interested in a police organization ceremony prior to scheduling the ceremony with the police organization.