

Funeral Etiquette and Christian Respect



Showing Reverence, Compassion, and Faith in Times of Loss

Month of November – Remembering Our Beloved Dead

During the month of **November**, we prayerfully remember all our beloved deceased. **Next weekend**, we will recall by name those who have died since last November and light a candle in their memory during Mass.

As we honor the faithful departed, here are a few reminders about **respecting the dead and supporting their families and friends**.

During a Funeral Procession or Service

- **Pause for the hearse** – Stop and allow the funeral procession to pass as a sign of respect. Make the Sign of the Cross.
- **Remove hats** – Especially for men, during processions, liturgies, or graveside services.
- **Stand quietly** – Remain still and silent when the hearse passes or at the cemetery.
- **Pray** – Offer a moment of silent prayer for the soul of the deceased and for comfort to their family.

Proper Attire

- Dress modestly and respectfully in **dark or neutral colors**.
- **Men:** suit, dress shirt, or collared shirt with slacks.
- **Women:** dress, skirt, or dress slacks with a modest blouse or top.
- **Children:** should also be dressed neatly and appropriately.

Our appearance should reflect **reverence, humility, and compassion** for those in mourning.

What to Say to the Family

Simple, heartfelt words are best:

- “I’m so sorry for your loss.”
- “You are in my prayers.”
- “She/he was a wonderful person.”
- “May God give you peace and comfort.”

A warm handshake, a hug, or simply being present often means more than words can express.

What Not to Say

Avoid comments that may unintentionally cause pain, such as:

- “I know how you feel.” (Each person’s grief is unique.)
- “She’s in a better place.” (Even true words can sound dismissive of their sorrow.)
- “It was God’s will.”
- “At least she lived a long life.”

Instead, focus on presence rather than explanation. Just *being there* in silence and prayer often says the most.

Offer compassion, not explanations—your presence and prayer are the greatest comfort.

A Final Word

Funerals and cemetery visits remind us of our shared hope in the **Resurrection**. By showing reverence, dressing appropriately, and speaking gently, we honor both the memory of the deceased and the God who promises eternal life.