

## San Antonio de Padua Catholic Funeral - Music and Liturgy Overview

On behalf of our pastor and all of the deacons and clergy, and our music and liturgy director, we are praying for you and offer our deepest condolences to your loved one and your entire family. We know how important this liturgy is, to celebrate the Holy Eucharist for your loved one, so we want to do everything we can to help make that day as meaningful as we can.

To make this process as smooth and transparent as possible, there are a few things to be aware of when deciding to celebrate a memorial liturgy for your deceased family member in the Catholic Church in regards to the music and the liturgy itself.

### MUSIC

The purpose of the liturgy is to direct our focus and energy towards God; in the sacrament of the Eucharist, in our hearts and minds in our prayers, in our intellect connected to God's word, and in our songs and praise. Thus, all musical selections **MUST** help to point us to God in any one of those respects. The musical selections must accompany and elevate the liturgy, but never distract, take precedence, or take focus away from the liturgy itself.

*With these ideologies in mind, all the music must be strictly Catholic, an approved classical piece, an approved instrumental piece, or an approved Christian song in line with Catholic theology upon request.*

Here are a few examples with reasoning behind each decision to help you better understand the reasoning and justification

1. "On Eagle's Wings" is an approved setting loosely based on Psalm 91, approved by the USCCB, with long standing Catholic history. No question here.

2. “My Way” by Frank Sinatra is a classic and beloved song about looking back at a life and subsequent accomplishments, but the focus is only on our secular views of life and death, and is actually quite backwards from Catholic theology. “I did it my way,” should rather be “I did it God’s way.” We must always point towards our Christian faith and our God.
3. “Prelude in C Major” by J. S. Bach is an instrumental piece from the Baroque era, rooted in a history of faith and church, and a well known setting of Ave Maria is based on this piece, so without question this would be approved.
4. “Unforgettable” by Nat King Cole, as an instrumental piece, would NOT be approved, however. Even though the words would not be sung, this piece is universally known, and people have secular associations tied to this song from various movies, tv commercials, etc. People still might be singing the words in their head, in which none of them are tied to our faith. In this case, we need to ask ourselves: Where are we directing people’s focus?

There are many beautiful and heartfelt songs about honoring the loved ones in our lives, but for the most part, if they are not pointing us to Christ, they are better suited for a family gathering, gravesite, or funeral home service.

*Please see the attached music suggestions form and worksheet and return filled out once you have decided on your selections*

## LITURGY

Most items in regards to the funeral liturgy will be discussed with the bereavement director, who you will meet or speak with. Here are just a few general things to keep in mind, though

- Words of remembrance (eulogies) are to be said just after the entrance song, before the mass officially begins, when directed by the presider. These words MUST be by only one person, and

limited to 5 minutes or less. Please see our form with further instructions on these Words of Remembrance. Any and all exceptions may only be made with the permission of the pastor and/or the liturgy director.

- If approved by the bereavement director, a rosary may be held (30 minutes) in advance of the liturgy itself, based on availability of the church
- All flowers, pictures, and items of remembrance must be coordinated with Bereavement Director or Pastor, and arranged per the bereavement directors on the day of the event, no later than 15 minutes prior to the liturgy. No personal effects may block any aisles, be considered a tripping hazard, or block the view of the sanctuary/altar space in any way.
- The rite of communion is reserved for practicing Catholics in good standing with the church, who are spiritually prepared to receive the Holy Eucharist.
- The lectors, or readers, who will proclaim the 1st and 2nd readings, should ideally be Catholic and familiar with the Catholic liturgy. All lectors should arrive at least 15 minutes prior to mass. If an exception is made, and those reading are not Catholic and/or familiar with how to properly perform these duties, they must be made available at least 20 minutes prior to the mass to teach them all proper practices and protocols related to the lectoring duties. If necessary, we may provide a reader for you
- Anyone proclaiming the petitions for the prayers of the faithful must also be rehearsed with proper practices and protocol relating to these duties as well. They must arrive 15 min prior to the mass to explain any technical protocols (microphone use and functionality, where to walk, bow, etc)
- Any other requests outside of normal Catholic liturgical practices must be approved by either/both the Liturgy Director or the pastor, without exception

*Please feel free to share with us any questions you have regarding any of these points. We want this liturgy to honor your loved one to go as smoothly as possible, and for you to feel fully comfortable with everything BEFORE the day of. Thank you so much, and our continued prayers and blessings are with you!*