



Funeral Planning Guide

St. Thomas the Apostle, 530 Elizabeth Street, Ann Arbor, MI
sta2.org | 734.761.8606

O send out your light and your truth;
let them lead me!
Let them bring me to your holy hill
and to your dwelling.

Then I will go to the altar of God,
to God my exceeding joy.

—Psalm 43

We are so sorry for your loss.

The pastoral staff at St. Thomas the Apostle would like to express our sincere sympathy to you.

From the moment of a person's death to the moment of burial, the church enters into one continuous time of prayer: "At the death of a Christian, the Church intercedes on behalf of the deceased because of its confident belief that death is not the end nor does it break the bonds forged in life" (Order of Christian Funerals). So we invite you to join the church in this time of prayer. Praying for the dead is an ancient practice grounded in the Jewish roots of the Christian faith; we pray for the departed to receive the fullness of Divine Mercy and thus find an eternal home in heaven with God.

We hope that the services that you are arranging at St. Thomas will be comforting and beautiful—we will do our best to make this happen. Please use this booklet to assist you with the planning process. You may bring it with you to any scheduled meetings, but if you are not able to work through it on your own, either because of limited time or limited energy, then we will simply do this together when we meet.

Our Catholic faith teaches us to mourn with great hope because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Nonetheless, grieving is always a difficult and unique human experience. We cannot fully understand your loss, but please know that you are not alone.

May God bless you and give you peace -



Table of Contents

WORKING TOGETHER

The funeral coordinator will be available to you until the time of service. Reach out whenever you need to.

CATHOLIC FUNERAL RITES

We offer funeral Masses, burial services, vigils, memorials, and luncheons

STIPENDS

The charges for a funeral at St. Thomas simply cover honorariums; there is no charge for use of the church.

GRIEF AND MOURNING

Our church's age-old traditions and teaching about death and what lies beyond the grave help us process loss and find hope God's mercy.

Working Together

If you haven't already done so, please arrange a meeting with the funeral coordinator, Franchesca Barillas, to plan for service(s).

If the priest who will preside is not able to join that meeting, then Franchesca will help you work with our parish administrator to arrange another meeting time with him, if possible, so that you can share information to help him learn more about the deceased and talk about your plans. Of course, this can also be an opportunity for you to receive comfort and spiritual care.

If you do not have an obituary to share with our staff, please take time to fill out the information on Worksheet 1, so that we can learn about the person who has passed and about your relationship.

Contacts for St. Thomas Clergy & Staff

Fr. William (Bill) Ashbaugh, Pastor: pastor@sta2.org
Franchesca Barillas, Funeral Coordinator: 734.761.8606 X 1008;
fbarillas@sta2.org
Cecilia Merigian, Parish Administrator: 734.761.8606 X 2800;
cmerigian@sta2.org
Jeanne Marie Gerig, Music Director: 734.761.8606 X 2253;
jmgerig@sta2.org
Church Office: 734.761.8606; frontdesk@sta2.org

Catholic Funeral Rites



The Catholic "Order of Christian Funerals" offers three ways to honor and pray for those who have died, showing reverence for the body while interceding for the soul. You may not choose to have all of these services, but they each provide an important and special opportunity to pray and mourn together.

PRAYER VIGIL

A prayer vigil takes place during visitation, when people gather to pay their last respects to the deceased. A family member, a friend, or a minister can offer prayers, readings from Scripture, and/or a reflection. To arrange a vigil, fill out the top of Worksheet 2.

FUNERAL MASS

The funeral Mass: During a funeral Mass, the church formally commends the deceased to God, offering the Lord's own Eucharistic Sacrifice (Communion) on his or her behalf. The beautiful words and rituals of the liturgy recall the person's baptism, which made him or her a child of God and opened the doors of heaven.

When you are planning a funeral Mass, you will select readings, songs, intercessory prayers, and also decide if you would like family and friends will participate in the service as readers, pallbearers, and in other capacities. Use Worksheet 3 to help you plan.

RITE OF COMMITAL (BURIAL SERVICE)

In the committal rite, mourners accompany the person's mortal remains to the gravesite. A priest or deacon blesses the grave and offers final prayers in hopeful anticipation of the bodily resurrection that Jesus experienced and promised to all who follow him.

Stipends

The cost for a funeral Mass at St. Thomas is \$600, which covers a \$25 administrative fee plus honorariums to the following people:

- Priest \$200
- Organist/pianist \$200
- Cantor \$150
- Sacristan \$25

If you are not using St. Thomas clergy or musicians, adjust the total accordingly; if you have any guest clergy concelebrating with the priest from St. Thomas, please stipend them personally.

The honorarium for a graveside service or vigil is \$100.

Note that payment is expected by the day of the service(s). Make all checks payable to St. Thomas Apostle, with the type of service and the name of the deceased in the memo line; e.g. Funeral Mass, John Smith. If St. Thomas is providing a luncheon, please add that to the same check and put "& luncheon" in the memo line, too.

Grief and Mourning

Simply stated, grief is the reaction to death, the emotions you may have at any given time: sadness, anger, fear, anxiety, and guilt. Grief is very different for everyone. No two people process loss in the same way. Furthermore, despite what you may have been told, there are no stepwise stages to grief, meaning there is no chronological, sequential path to "get through" in order to be all done with grieving. In fact, grief typically takes its course in waves, although the trajectory over time should be towards diminishing intensity and a sense of resolution.

Mourning, on the other hand, is the outward expression of internal grief, your proactive response. Mourning is not passive; rather it consists of the many ways you can express and work through grief. Mourning moves healing forward.

Grief Support

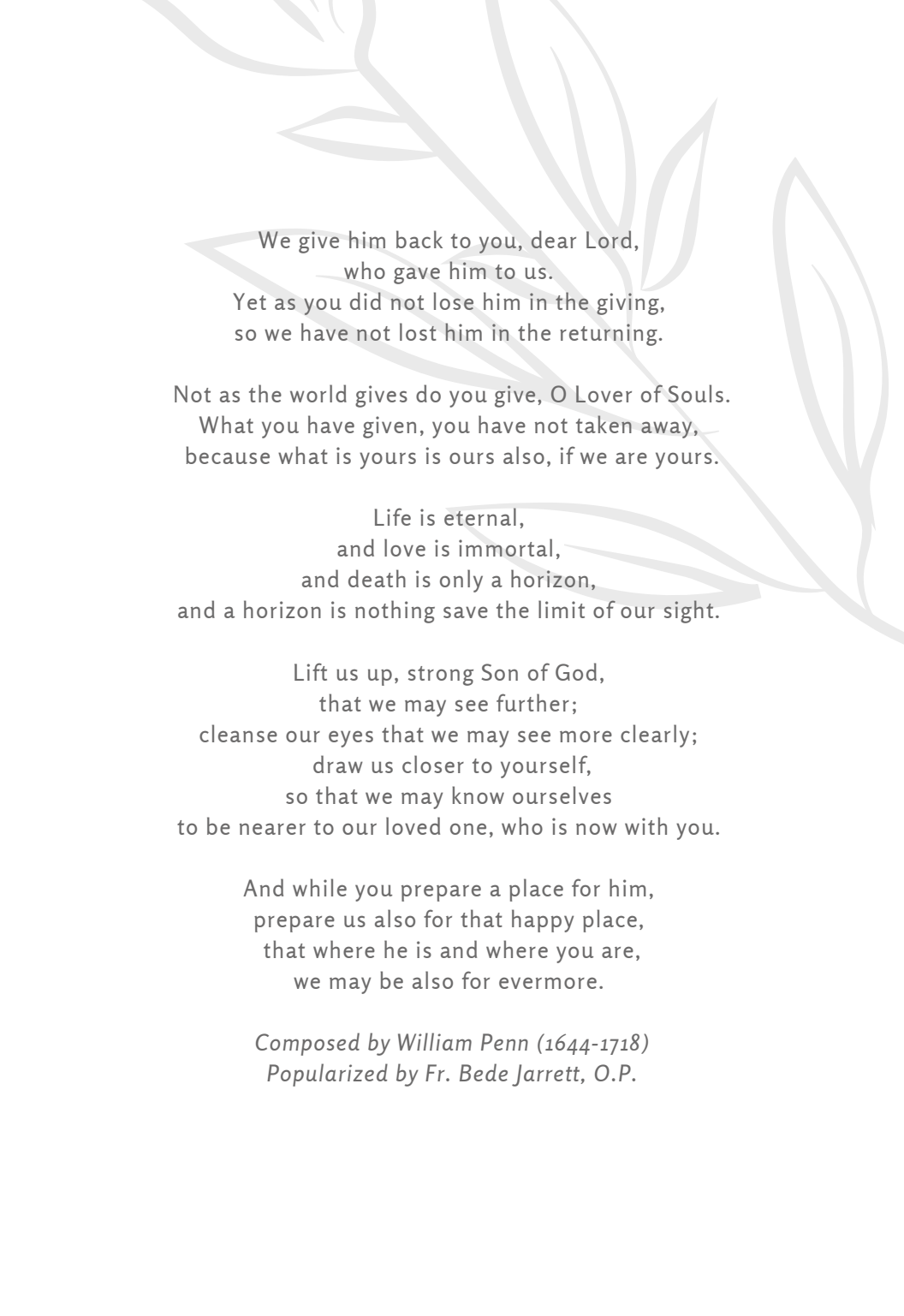
St. Thomas Church will be holding you in prayer for the next year and we will remember your loved one again at our All Souls' Day Memorial celebration on November 2. Local parishes, hospitals, hospices, and funeral homes also offer resources and groups to help you through the grieving process.

Contact Franchesca Barillas, our Funeral Coordinator, to explore options currently available in your area: 734.761.8606 X 1008; fbarillas@sta2.org.

Notes







We give him back to you, dear Lord,
— who gave him to us.
Yet as you did not lose him in the giving,
so we have not lost him in the returning.

Not as the world gives do you give, O Lover of Souls.
What you have given, you have not taken away,
because what is yours is ours also, if we are yours.

Life is eternal,
and love is immortal,
and death is only a horizon,
and a horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight.

Lift us up, strong Son of God,
that we may see further;
cleanse our eyes that we may see more clearly;
draw us closer to yourself,
so that we may know ourselves
to be nearer to our loved one, who is now with you.

And while you prepare a place for him,
prepare us also for that happy place,
that where he is and where you are,
we may be also for evermore.

Composed by William Penn (1644-1718)
Popularized by Fr. Bede Jarrett, O.P.