

# Serving Funerals

## St. Louis Bertrand Church, Louisville, KY

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### *Details and Instructions for the Servers and the Sacristan*

*Preparation:* Allow approximately 40 minutes for set up. Begin by opening the safe.

*Entrance of the Church:* Bring the pall (coffin cover) to the last pew or the table behind the last pew.

*Break in the Altar Rail:* Slowly roll the Paschal Candle stand to the base of the altar steps.

*Sanctuary:* Place the tabernacle key in the tabernacle and check to see how many hosts are there. Place bells in choir stall on pulpit side. Place thurible stand and boat by the door on the pulpit side of the sanctuary. Light the altar candles and Paschal candle 10 minutes before the funeral Mass is scheduled to begin. (You may need to remove the follower on the Paschal candle in order to see the wick and light it.)

*Credence Tables:* (**pulpit side**) the principal chalice fully prepared (1 clean purificator, 1 priest's host on the paten, covered by the pall, and a corporal covered with a violet veil), water cruet, lavabo, and finger towel.

*Gift table in nave:* place a cruet of wine and a paten with sufficient hosts for number of Catholics attending funeral Mass. Place the gift table at the pew opposite the ambo.

*Ambo:* The Lectionary for special occasions (funeral readings) or one of the funeral rite books marked with the right readings when you know them.

*Servers' sacristy:* place two charcoal briquettes on the table just inside the door leading from the sanctuary along with a lighter and the thurible to be used during the funeral. Light the charcoal 5 minutes before Mass.

*Priests' sacristy:* Place the aspergillum and aspersorium (holy water sprinkler and bucket) on the sacrarium counter. Make sure that there is a couple inches worth of holy water in the aspersorium (the holy water font is in the back corner of the church on the St. Joseph side.) Turn on all church lights after lighting the charcoal.

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**Entrance and opening rite:** With the aspersorium in your left hand, proceeds the priest into the sanctuary through the priests' sanctuary door. This is done as the casket enters the doors of the church. Lead the priest to the center of the sanctuary and both genuflect towards the tabernacle. Then lead the priest to the entrance of the church and the casket continuing to carry the holy water. The priest greets the mourners, there is a brief introductory rite, and then he blesses the casket with holy water. The pall bearers or family members will place the pall on the casket at this time. An opening prayer is said by the priest, and then you should lead the priest and the rest of the funeral procession to the front of the church for the Liturgy of the Word. When you enter the sanctuary, bow to the altar of sacrifice and place the aspersorium on the credence table on the pulpit side. Take your seat in the choir stall.

**Liturgy of the Word:** Proceeds per usual.

**Prayers of the Faithful and Preparation of the Gifts:** Following the Prayers of the Faithful, prepare the altar in the usual way then proceed with the priest to receive the gifts at the break in the communion rail. After the preparation of the chalice (water and wine brought to the priest), bring the priest the thurible and incense. Follow the priest (some priests like the server to hold up the edge of the chasuble, but you should ask if he would like you to "hold the chasuble") around the altar as he incenses the gifts, altar, coffin, and paschal candle. When the incensing is done, take the thurible from the priest (check to see whether the priest is incensed at this point) and return it to the stand. Then bring the lavabo, water, and finger towel for the washing of the hands. When you return these to the credence table place an extra briquette in the thurible.

**Following Holy Communion:** Take the thurible and incense boat in your left hand and the aspersorium in your right and proceed with the priest to the break in the communion rail. The priest will incense the casket by himself and say a prayer of farewell. At this point, the thurible should be set with the boat on the floor inside the communion rail outside of the way of traffic. With the aspersorium in hand, now proceed with the priest ahead of the rest of the funeral procession to the entrance of the church. The priest will once again bless the casket with holy water here, and the pall will be taken off by the pall bearers. When the funeral is ended, take both pall and aspersorium back to the priests' sacristy.

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**Post- Funeral:** If the paten and chalice have not been purified, take them to the priests' sacristy, so that the priest can do this. Put away the funeral pall and aspersorium. Extinguish the altar and Paschal candles. Return the Paschal candle to its place near the Baptismal Fount. (Allow a few minutes for the wax to harden on the Paschal candle before you try moving it to avoid the spillage of hot wax.) Remove the funeral flowers and place them in the Lourdes Grotto. Empty the thurible outside or in a metal bucket that contains only ash and return it along with the stand and the boat to the closet. If the tabernacle is not locked, lock it and return the key to the safe. Place all purified vessels in the safe. Return the bells to the safe. Lock the safe (close the door and spin the dial.) Turn off lights in the church.

**Additional Notes:** Some priests use the incense only once; check with the celebrant to find out for certain. Also check with the priest to see if extraordinary ministers of holy communion will be used and if so how many chalices and patens you should set out. Place an extra purificator for every paten used.