

*As we prepare the Funeral Mass for your loved one
please select as appropriate from the following:*

- **One reading from the list of First Readings** (pp 2 - 6)

- **One Responsorial Psalm, *if not sung*** (pp 7 - 9)

- **One reading from the list of Second Readings** (pp 10-14)

- **One Gospel Acclamation, *if not sung*** (pp 15-16)

- **Prayers of the Faithful – samples provided** (pp 17-18)

- **Communion Reflection samples, *if required*** (pp 19-23)

Please return this booklet to St John's after Mass

First Readings

1.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah. (*Is. 49:8.14-16*)

Thus says the Lord:

'In a time of favour I have answered you,
on a day of salvation I have helped you.'

But Zion said,

'The Lord has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me.'

'Can a woman forget her nursing child,
or show no compassion for the child of her womb?

Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.

See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands.'

The word of the Lord.

2.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (*Is. 41:9-11.13-14*)

You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off.

Do not fear, for I am with you.

Do not be afraid, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you, I will help you.

I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

All who are incensed against you will be ashamed and disgraced;
those who strive against you will be as nothing and will perish.

For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand;

it is I who say to you, 'Do not fear, I will help you.'

Your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.

The word of the Lord.

3.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (3:1-6.9)

The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God,
no torment shall ever touch them.
In the eyes of the unwise they appear to die;
their going looked like a disaster,
their leaving us, like annihilation; but they are in peace.
If they experienced punishment as men see it,
their hope was rich with immortality;
slight was their affliction, great will their blessing be.
God has put them to the test
and proved them worthy to be with him;
he has tested them like gold in a furnace,
and accepted them as a holocaust.
They who trust in him will understand the truth,
those who are faithful will live with him in love;
for grace and mercy await those he has chosen.
The word of the Lord.

4.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah (25:6-9)

On this mountain, the Lord hosts will prepare for all peoples
a banquet of rich food.
On this mountain he will remove the mourning veil
covering all peoples, and the shroud enwrapping all nations,
he will destroy Death forever.
The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek;
he will take away his peoples shame everywhere on earth,
for the Lord has said so.
That day, it will be said: See this is our God
in whom we hoped for salvation;
We exult and rejoice that he has saved us.
The word of the Lord.

5.

A reading from the book of Wisdom (4:7-15)

But the righteous, though they die early, will be at rest.
For old age is not honoured for length of time,
or measured by number of years;
but understanding is grey hair for anyone,
and a blameless life is ripe old age.
There were some who pleased God and were loved by him,
and while living among sinners were taken up.
They were caught up so that evil might not change their
understanding or guile deceive their souls.
For the fascination of wickedness obscures what is good,
and roving desire perverts the innocent mind.
Being perfected in a short time, they fulfilled long years;
for their souls were pleasing to the Lord,
therefore he took them quickly from the midst of wickedness.
Yet the peoples saw and did not understand,
or take such a thing to heart,
that God's grace and mercy are with his elect,
and that he watches over his holy ones.

The word of the Lord.

6.

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes (3:1-8.11)

For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven;
A time to be born, and a time to die;
A time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
A time to break down, and a time to build up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh
A time to mourn, and a time to dance.
A time to throw away stones, and a time
to gather stones together.

A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
A time to keep, and a time to cast away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew.
A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
A time for war, and a time for peace.
God has made everything suitable for its own time.
The word of the Lord.

7.

A Reading from the book of Lamentations (3:17-26)

My soul is shut out from peace; I have forgotten happiness.
And now I say, 'My strength is gone,
that hope which came from the Lord'.
Brooding on my anguish and affliction is gall and wormwood.
My spirit ponders it continually and sinks within me.
This is what I shall tell my heart, and so recover hope:
the favours of the Lord are not all past,
his kindnesses are not exhausted;
every morning they are renewed; great is his faithfulness.
'My portion is the Lord' says my soul,
'and so I will hope in him.'
The Lord is good to those who trust him,
to the soul that searches for him.
It is good to wait in silence for the Lord to save.
The word of the Lord.

8.

A reading from the book of Sirach (Sir. 2:1-9)

When you come to serve the Lord, prepare yourself for testing.

Set your heart right and be steadfast,
and do not be impetuous in time of calamity.

Cling to him and do not depart,
so that your last days may be prosperous.

Accept whatever befalls you,
and in times of humiliation be patient.

For gold is tested in the fire, and those found acceptable,
in the furnace of humiliation.

Trust in him, and he will help you;
make your ways straight, and hope in him.

You who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy; do not stray,
or else you may fall.

You who fear the Lord, trust in him,
and your reward will not be lost.

You who fear the Lord, hope for good things –
for lasting joy and mercy.

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalms

1.

R: *The Lord is my Shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.*

1. The Lord is my shepherd; there
is nothing I shall want. Fresh
and green are the pastures where
he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. **R.**

2. He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear?
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort. **R.**

3. You have prepared a banquet for me
in sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. **R.**

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lords own house shall I dwell.
for ever and ever. **R.**

2.

R. *My Soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life.*

1. Like the deer that yearns
for running streams,
so my soul is yearning
for you, my God. **R.**

2. My soul is thirsting for God,
the God of my life;
when can I enter and see
the face of God? **R.**

3. These things I will remember
as pour out my soul:
how I would lead the rejoicing crowd
into the house of God,
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving,
the throng wild with joy. **R.**

3.

**R. *I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness
in the land of the living.***

- 1 The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink? **R.**

- 2 There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord,
all the days of my life,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his temple. **R.**

- 3 O Lord, hear my voice when I call;
have mercy and answer.
It is your face, O Lord, that I seek;
hide not your face. **R.**
- 4 I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness
in the land of the living.
Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.
Hope in the Lord! **R.**

4.

R. *Out of the depths, I cry to you, O Lord.*

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.
Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive.
to the voice of my pleading. **R.**
2. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,
Lord, who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness;
for this we revere you. **R.**
3. My soul is waiting for the Lord,
I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord
more than a watchman for daybreak. **R.**
4. Because with the Lord there is mercy,
and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem
from all its iniquity. **R.**

Second Readings

1.

A reading from the first letter of St. John (3:1-2)

Think of the love that the father has lavished on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.
Because the world refused to acknowledge him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.
My dear people, we are already the children of God,
but what we are to be in the future
has not yet been revealed;
all we know is, that when it is revealed
we shall be like him
because we shall see him as he really is.
The word of the Lord.

2.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans (8:31-39)

If God is for us, who is against us?
He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for us all,
will he not with him also give us everything else?
Who will bring any charge against God's elect?
It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn?
Is it Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised,
who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us?

Who will separate us from the love of Christ?
Will hardship, or distress, or persecution,
or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
No, in all these things we are more than conquerors
through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all
creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

3.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans

(14:7-12)

The life and death of each one of us has its influence on others;
if we live, we live for the Lord;
and if we die, we die for the Lord,
so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord.

This explains why Christ both died and came to life;
it is so that he might be Lord both of dead and of the living.
We shall all have to stand before the Judgement seat of God;
as scripture says: By my life – it is the Lord who speaks –
every knee shall bend before me,
and every tongue shall praise God.

It is to God, therefore,
that each of us must give an account of himself.

The word of the Lord.

4.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

(8:14-18)

All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.
For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,
but you have received a spirit of adoption.

When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit
bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God,
and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs
with Christ – if, in fact, we suffer with him
so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time
are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us.
The word of the Lord.

5.

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to Timothy (4:6-8)

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation,
and the time of my departure has come.

I have fought the good fight,

I have finished the race,

I have kept the faith.

From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness,
which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day,
and not only to me but also to all
who have longed for his appearing.

The word of the Lord.

6.

A reading from the first letter of St John (4:7-12.17)

Let us love one another, for love is from God;
everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

Whoever does not love, does not know God,
for God is love.

God's love was revealed among us in this way:

God sent his only Son into the world
so that we might live through him.

In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us,
and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Since God loved us so much,
we also ought to love one another.

No one has ever seen God; if we love one another,
God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us,
that we may have confidence for the day of judgement.

The word of the Lord.

7.

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

(15 :51-57)

Listen, I will tell you a mystery!
We will not all die, but we will all be changed,
in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet.
For the trumpet will sound,
and the dead will be raised imperishable,
and we shall be changed.
For this perishable body must put on imperishability,
and this mortal body must put on immortality.

When this perishable body puts on imperishability,
and this mortal body puts on immortality,
then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:
'Death has been swallowed up in victory.
Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?'
The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.
But thanks be to God,
who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
The word of the Lord.

8.

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

(15:20-26)

Christ has been raised from the dead,
the first fruits of those who have died.
For since death came through a human being,
the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being.
For as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ.
But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits,
then at his coming those who belong to Christ.
Then comes the end,
when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father,
after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power.
For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.
The last enemy to be destroyed is death.
The word of the Lord.

9.

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

(4:13-18)

We would not have you uninformed, brothers and sisters,
about those who have died,
so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.
For, since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so,
through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died.
For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord,
that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord,
will by no means precede those who have died.
For the Lord himself, with a cry of command,
with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet,
will descend from heaven,
and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.

Therefore, encourage one another with these words.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamations

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Come, you whom my father has blessed, says the Lord; take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world.

Alleluia.

OR

Alleluia, Alleluia! Blessed are you father, Lord of heaven and earth; for revealing the mysteries of the kingdom to mere children.

Alleluia.

OR

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the Saviour we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Alleluia.

OR

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Happy are those who die in the Lord!
Now they can rest from their work,
since their good deeds go with them.

Alleluia!

During the Season of Lent:

'Glory and praise to you, O Christ'

Or

'Praise to you, O Christ, King of Eternal Glory'

are used **instead** of the *Alleluia* part of the Acclamation.

Prayers of the Faithful

*(Please note: These Prayers of the Faithful are samples only.
You should adapt, personalise or replace them as you see fit)*

1. In baptism N. received the light of Christ. We ask you Lord to scatter the darkness now and lead him/her over the waters of death to eternal life.
Lord hear us.

2. Our bother / sister N. was nourished at the table of the Saviour. Welcome him / her into the halls of the heavenly banquet.
Lord hear us.

3. N. lived believing in Christ as the hope of his / her life. May Christ now lead him / her safely home to the Father's house.
Lord hear us.

4. May those who grieve over the loss of N. be comforted by the hope that the Good Shepherd will take care of him / her.
Lord hear us.

5. For the doctors, nurses, priests and all who looked after N. so well. We ask you Lord to reward them for their goodness, kindness and patience, and to bless them in their work and everyday.
Lord hear us.

6. For those who mourn N's death: that they may be comforted by the knowledge that after all her (his) pain, she (he) is now at peace.
Lord hear us.

7. For all here present: that we may remember that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory which is waiting for us in the next.
Lord hear us.
8. That N., whose life was cut short by death, may enter into the fullness of that life Christ won for us by his own death.
Lord hear us.
9. As death surprised her (him) with its suddenness, may God now surprise her (him) with his kindness and mercy.
Lord hear us.
10. For N's family, relatives, and friends: that the Lord may keep their hearts and minds in his love and peace.
Lord hear us.
11. For ourselves: that in the midst of the trials and uncertainties of life, our trust in God may remain firm.
Lord hear us.
12. That N., who was gentle, sincere, kind, and peace-loving, may now come to possess the happiness of the kingdom of heaven.
Lord hear us.
13. N. lived Christ's commandment of love; may she (he) now hear those words, 'Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'
Lord hear us.
14. N. worked hard all his (her) life; may he (she) now enjoy rest from his (her) labours.

Reflections

1. Death Is Only An Horizon

We give them back to you, O Lord, who first gave them to us;
and as you did not lose them in the giving,
so we do not lose them in the return.

Not as the world gives do you give, O Lover of souls.
For what is yours is ours also, if we belong to you.

Life is unending because love is undying,
and the boundaries of this life are but an horizon,
and an horizon is but the limit of our vision.

Lift us up, strong Son of God, that we may see further.
Strengthen our faith that we may see beyond the horizon.

And while you prepare a place for us, as you have promised,
prepare us also for that happy place;
that where you are we may be also,
with those we have loved, forever.

2. All Is Well

Death is nothing at all;
I have only slipped away into the next room.
I am I, and you are you;
Whatever we were to each other, that we are still

Call me by my old familiar name,
speak to me in the easy way which you always used.
Put no difference into your tone;
wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.
Laugh as we always laughed
at the little jokes we enjoyed together.
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.
Let my name be ever the household word it was.
Let it be spoken without effect,
without the ghost of a shadow on it.
Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same as it ever was;
there is absolutely unbroken continuity.

What is this death but a negligible accident;
why should I be out of mind because I am out of sight?
I am but waiting for you, for an interval,
somewhere very near, just around the corner.
All is well.

3. Death of the Elderly

When a person reaches advanced old age
after having lived a full life,
dying becomes almost as natural
as the picking of a ripe apple,
or the falling of a brightly coloured leaf in autumn.

The harvest has been gathered in,
the journey ended, the story told,
life's tasks finished and neatly bound together
like a sheaf of wheat.

There is a roundedness about the person's life,
a sense of completion and fulfilment;
and while there is sadness at his (her) leaving us,
there is joy too,
so much so that the funeral becomes a celebration.

Such a death is like the coming of sleep
after a long and rewarding day's work.

4. Remembering

We all love to be remembered.
But if we want to be remembered,
we have a duty also to remember.

Memory is a powerful thing.
Wrongly used it brings death.
Rightly used it brings life,
and is a form of immortality.
It keeps the past alive.
Those we remember never die;
they continue to walk and talk with us.

N., we want you to know
that we haven't forgotten you.
We remember you.
And your memory most definitely
brings life to us today.

May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May the Lord let his face shine on you,
and be gracious to you.
May the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace.
Amen.

5. Suffer Little Children ...

God watched you as you suffered.
He knew you had your share.
He gently closed your weary eyes
and took you in his care.

Our hearts ache with sadness.
Our secret tears will flow.
What it meant to lose you now,
no one will ever know.

When we feel sad or lonely
we seem to hear you say:
Cheer up and carry on,
we'll meet again some day!

6. Miss me – But Let Me Go

Miss me – but let me go.

When I come to the end of the road
And the sun has set for me
I want no tears in a gloom filled room,
Why cry for a soul set free?

Miss me a little but not for long
And not with your head bowed low,
Remember the love that we once shared,
Miss me – but let me go.

For this is a journey we all must take,
And each must go alone,
It's all part of my Master's plan,
A step on the road to home.

When we are lonely and sick of heart
Go to the friends that we know,
And bury your sorrows in doing good works.
Miss me – but let me go.

Perhaps if we could see the splendour of the hand,
To which our loved are called from you and me,
We'd understand.

Perhaps if we could hear the welcome they receive
From old familiar voices all so dear,
We would not grieve.

Perhaps if we could know the reason why they went
We'd smile and wipe away the tears that flow,
We'd wait content.

Miss me - but let me go.