



Remarks of Remembrance ("Eulogy")
Policy for Funerals
The Diocese of Bridgeport

Remarks of Remembrance (“Eulogies”)

The *Order of Christian Funerals* rarely uses the word “eulogy,” and then only to describe what the homily should *not* be. The common understanding of a eulogy is not appropriate for Catholic Mass and therefore, is not permitted. However, there can be an opportunity for brief and appropriate remarks of remembrance at the end of the Mass on some occasions.

In order to assure that any remarks are in harmony with the sacred character of the Mass, the Church setting and the solemnity of the occasion, any “Remarks of Remembrance” given at funerals in the Diocese of Bridgeport are regulated by the following parameters:

Since the “Prayer after Communion” concludes the Communion Rite, “Remarks of Remembrance” must take place *after* the “Prayer after Communion” and before the Final Commendation.

In a Catholic funeral, the “Remarks of Remembrance” should be seen as a way to give praise and thanks to God for the life of the deceased. In other words, the remarks should place emphasis on how God has been seen acting in the life and in the death of the deceased or how God has blessed us and the world through the life and faithful example of the deceased. Note that this focus on God’s action is what differentiates these Remarks from a “eulogy.”

The Remarks cannot simply be a listing of the accomplishments of the deceased or a recitation of his/her biography. Even more so, care must be taken that the remarks do not become a recitation of stories about the speaker himself or herself.

Only one person offers Remarks of Remembrance at the Funeral Mass.

As an option, if there are several people who would ask or be asked to offer such remarks, they could contribute to compose one set of Remarks together. As a possibility, all could stand near the pulpit while one of them reads the Remarks in the name of the group.

As another alternative, a time could be set aside during the Vigil (“wake”) or at the after-funeral gathering for more people to share remarks individually.

The person chosen to offer the Remarks should be able to maintain composure while speaking. It becomes very uncomfortable for all present when grief overcomes the speaker.

Keeping always in mind the sacred nature of the Mass and the church setting and the solemnity of the occasion, the person who offers the remarks is not permitted to share stories, use language or perform any action which is in poor taste, disrespectful of the deceased or embarrassing to anyone present for the funeral. Any questions regarding propriety should be directed to the parish priest or his delegate beforehand.

Remarks of Remembrance are to be WRITTEN out beforehand and not given "off-the-cuff." A complete copy of the remarks must be shared with the clergy-celebrant for review no later than the day before the funeral.

In all cases, the Remarks of Remembrance must not be excessively long or appear more important than the Mass itself. The remarks may be NO LONGER THAN 5 to 7 MINUTES in duration. This is usually the equivalent of one single-spaced typewritten page.