

Dear Family,

Please accept our heartfelt sympathy on the loss of your loved one.

The Church's funeral rites celebrate the life of the deceased, proclaim our faith in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and offer prayers for the repose of the soul of the departed. Our Funeral Ministry is honored to accompany you during this difficult time and assist you in planning a meaningful and prayerful Funeral Mass.

This guide outlines our parish policies, planning process, and expectations so that your family may focus on prayer, remembrance, and healing.

Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Church

Funeral Ministry Policy, Planning Guide & Process

The Funeral Ministry of Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Church provides hope for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. We endeavor to be a source of love, comfort, encouragement, and support as the bereaved journey from mourning to joy.

If you have recently lost a loved one and would like to begin planning a funeral, please contact the Parish Office at **919-657-4800 x7281**. A member of our staff will connect you with the Funeral Ministry Team to guide you through each step of the process.

To help support the funeral planning process, liturgical preparation, facility use, worship aid preparation, music ministry coordination, and administrative support, Saint Mary Magdalene Catholic Church kindly requests a **\$600 funeral donation**, payable to **St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church (StMM)**. The donation may be submitted to the parish office along with the completed Funeral Planning Sheet.

No family will be denied funeral services because of financial hardship. Families experiencing financial difficulty should speak confidentially with the pastor or parish office.

Information Required for Scheduling

The family will be asked to provide:

- Name of the deceased
- Date of birth
- Date of death
- Name of funeral home or cremation provider
- Family contact information
- Preferred funeral date and time
- Preferred priest, if requested
- Whether burial will be local, at the StMM Columbarium, or elsewhere

Funeral Planning Selections

The Funeral Planning Sheet provides space for families to select and designate:

Liturgical Readings

- First Reading
https://www.stmm.church/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Microsoft-Word-First-Reading-First_Reading1.pdf
- Second Reading
https://www.stmm.church/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Second_Reading1.pdf
- Gospel Selection
<https://www.stmm.church/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Microsoft-Word-Gospel-Gospel.pdf>

Liturgical Ministers

- Readers for the First and Second Readings
- Reader for the Prayer of the Faithful
- Gift Bearers for Bread and Wine

Music Selections

- Entrance Hymn
- Preparation Hymn
- Communion Hymn
- Recessional Hymn
- Song of Farewell (provided by parish norms)

Additional Planning Elements

- Floral arrangements (must be taken / brought home after funeral mass)
- Display photographs
- Pallbearers
- Rosary before Mass
- Military honors, when applicable

Remarks of Remembrance Policy

At the discretion of the presiding priest, one family member or representative may offer brief Remarks of Remembrance during the Funeral Mass.

To preserve the sacred character of the liturgy:

- Only one speaker is permitted.
- The remarks should last **NO** more than **three (3) minutes**.
- The remarks should focus on the faith, legacy, values, and impact of the deceased.
- This time is not intended to serve as a full eulogy or chronological life review.
- Extended tributes are more appropriately shared at the wake, visitation, reception, or family gathering.

Funeral Ministry personnel may provide visual cues to assist speakers in staying within the allotted time.

Funeral Reception and Luncheon Policy

Saint Mary Magdalene may provide space for funeral receptions, luncheons, or gatherings following the Funeral Mass.

Occupancy Requirement

The parish narthex has a legal maximum occupancy of:

150 Persons

This limit includes family, guests, parish volunteers, clergy, and staff.

Therefore:

- Receptions anticipated to exceed 150 attendees cannot be held in the narthex.
- Families expecting attendance above this limit must arrange an alternate venue.
- Parish staff reserve the right to deny facility use when expected attendance exceeds occupancy restrictions.
- Occupancy limits will be strictly enforced for safety and regulatory compliance.

Food and Hospitality

- Reception arrangements must be coordinated in advance.
- Outside catering may be permitted subject to parish approval.
- All decorations and room setup plans must be approved by parish staff.
- Families and volunteers are responsible for assisting with cleanup following the event.

Worship Aid and Program

Families are asked to provide:

- A photograph of the deceased
- Correct spelling of names
- Final liturgical selections
- Any approved memorial information

The worship aid will be prepared by the parish and provided to the family for review before printing. A final copy will also be supplied to the presiding priest.

Saint Mary Magdalene Funeral Planning

Flow Chart

NOTICE OF DEATH

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Family Member or Funeral Home

Contacts Parish Office

(919-657-4800 x7281)

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Parish Office Offers Sympathy

and Collects Initial Information

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Notify Clergy

and Review Calendar Availability

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Tentative Funeral Date and Time Established

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Funeral Coordinator Contacts Family

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Family Completes

Funeral Planning Sheet

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Readings Music Ministers

Selected Selected Selected

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Family Provides:

- Photo of Deceased

- Contact Information
- Burial Details
- Donation (\$600)

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Parish Prepares Worship Aid
and Funeral Program

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Family Reviews and Approves Proof

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Funeral Mass Celebrated

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Burial / Committal Service

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Reception or Luncheon
(if applicable)

Maximum Narthex Capacity:
150 Persons

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Funeral Ministry Follow-Up
and Continued Pastoral Care