

FUNERAL EULOGIES In the Order of Christian Funerals, the ritual notes for the celebration of the Funeral Mass indicate:

A member or a friend of the family may speak in remembrance of the deceased before the final commendation begins. (#170)
(This means: after the Prayer After Communion)

A similar note is found in the OCF for the Vigil For The Deceased:

A member or a friend of the family may speak in remembrance of the deceased. (#80)

Thus the revised rite of the Christian Funeral foresees the inclusion of a eulogy as part of the burial ritual. This is not to take the place of the homily which is preached after the gospel reading. However, in the last 15 years of using the revised rite, a series of problems have been observed:

1. The eulogy is often not prepared, which results in a rambling presentation.
2. The eulogy is lengthy: longer than the homily, longer than the Eucharistic Prayer, and sometimes longer than the Funeral Mass.
3. The eulogy is presented by a number of family members or friends.
4. The eulogy fails to mention the faith-life of the deceased, and becomes a recital of secular concerns.

Due to these issues, as of the First Sunday of Advent 2004, Bishop Donald W. Trautman, establishing as particular liturgical law for the diocese of Erie, is requiring that the pastors, the faithful, and the funeral directors abide by the following directives for the inclusion of a eulogy during the rites of christian burial. A dispensation of these directives can be granted for a serious reason in an individual case only by the Diocesan Bishop, the Vicar General, or one of the Regional Episcopal Vicars.

- A. The eulogy might more fittingly be spoken during the Vigil for the Deceased, which sometimes takes the form of a "sharing of memories," or at the conclusion of the Rite of Committal at the cemetery.
- B. The eulogy should be shorter in length than either the homily or the Eucharistic Prayer, approximately three to five minutes in length.
- C. There should be only one eulogy at the Funeral Mass.
- D. The eulogy should make some reference to the faith-life of the deceased, i.e., the Church, the family, the personal life of the deceased.
- E. The eulogy should be composed prior to the liturgy and shown to the presiding minister for general approval of content and length.
- F. The preceding five guidelines are to be shared with the members of parish families in order to apprise them of the guidelines before a funeral takes place or is planned. A eulogy is not a necessary part of the funeral, but is permitted when the words will bring hope and comfort to the bereaved as well as honor to the deceased.