



Saint Julie Billiard

CATHOLIC CHURCH

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GUIDELINES FOR WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE

Often, as families gather to mourn the loss of a loved one, many stories and memories are shared. While the Order of Christian Funerals does not forbid Words of Remembrance during the Funeral Mass, it does encourage families to make them during the visitation or funeral luncheon. The focus during the Funeral Liturgy is centered on the hope of the Resurrection in Jesus Christ. Since Words of Remembrance are centered on the life of the deceased loved one, it is best to make them during the many other moments of the family's gathering.

In instances where a family requests that there be some Words of Remembrance offered during Mass, the Parish reserves the right to decide whether they are appropriate at the time. For example, there are times when the Church will celebrate more than one funeral in a day; within these time constraints Words of Remembrance might not be accommodated.

We offer the following guidelines on preparing Words of Remembrance:

- Words of Remembrance are delivered after Holy Communion and are presented from the ambo. The priest will invite the presenter to come forward at the appropriate time.
- Only a single offering of Words of Remembrance is allowed and should be made by a single presenter.
- The Words of Remembrance must be written in advance. Often family members become emotional and lose focus. A written text allows the presenter to speak clearly, sharing what was intended without omitting something important.
- Words of Remembrance must be reviewed by the Parish to ensure that both content and language is consistent with the spirit of prayer. Words of Remembrance are due by 4:00pm the day before the funeral. If they are not received and reviewed by the Church, they will not be permitted during the funeral. They may be dropped off at the office, faxed (708-429-6788) or emailed (funeral@stjulie.org). A general rule of thumb is that the typed text should be no more than 2 pages, double-spaced and using a 14 point Times New Roman font.
- Words of Remembrance should be brief in nature and speak about the loved one's faith and character. It is impossible to capture the *entirety* of a person's life in the few moments allowed. Choosing two or three highlights of a person's loving influence within the family and community is usually most effective, especially when the remarks highlight the deceased's legacy of faith.
- The ideal length of Words of Remembrance is between 3 and 5 minutes. Words of Remembrance that go beyond the 5-minute mark often lose the interest of the gathered assembly. Presentations of Words of Remembrance which are excessive in length may be interrupted by the presider and brought to conclusion out of respect for the Church, for the assembled faithful, and above all the liturgy itself – especially if there are multiple funerals scheduled.

St. Julie Billiard Parish reserves the right to amend and/or omit Words of Remembrance at any funeral based upon the pastoral judgement of the Parish.