The Bright Promise of Immortality
Funeral Guidelines for the Diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana

A. Evangelization Opportunity

In planning and carrying out the funeral rites the pastor and all other ministers should keep in mind the life of the deceased and the circumstances of death. They should also take into consideration the spiritual and psychological needs of the family and friends of the deceased to express grief and their sense of loss, to accept the reality of death and to comfort one another. [OCF, #16]

1. There is an opportunity for the Church to sensitively evangelize Catholics who are mourning the death of a loved one. In particular this opportunity is enhanced in the personal visit given by the priest of the parish or institution to the family as soon as possible after the death; by the priest’s ministry in preparing the funeral rites with the family; by the preaching on the Word during the Funeral Rites; and by the follow-up care offered by the priest, deacon and parish community. Families who have grown alienated from the Church because of inhospitality or lack of concern on the part of the ministers find it very difficult to recover. Always a spirit of charity should prevail, particularly in preparing the funeral rites of the Order.

B. Preaching and Eulogies

1. Only a priest or deacon may preach the homily at a funeral liturgy.

2. A eulogy [remembrance] is not appropriate where a homily is prescribed [OCF #27], although examples from the person’s life may be used in a homily. The literary genre of eulogy is not a homiletic form. Rather, the homily is to “illumine the mystery of Christian death in the light of the risen Christ [Catechism of the Catholic Church #1688] as proclaimed in the Scriptures.

3. The reading of the obituary of the deceased or poetry should not replace the homily at a funeral liturgy.

4. Excellence in preaching is of critical importance to the evangelizing task of the Church, especially at a moment when the faithful who live apart from the regular life of the Church may yearn for a message of faith and Christian hope.

5. In the Diocese of Baton Rouge, one speaker chosen by the family may offer a three to five minute remembrance of the deceased person at the Funeral liturgy at one of these points:[These are listed in order of preference]
   a. The Vigil [Wake] for the Deceased is a more fitting time for individuals to share remembrances of the deceased. This may be done during the Vigil [Wake] Prayer of the Church held the evening before or during and Vigil/Wake held prior to the Funeral Mass.
   b. A remembrance may be given before the Dismissal to Church, if the Wake is
conducted at a Funeral Home.
c. If there is no Vigil Wake in Church prior to the Funeral Mass, the remembrance could be offered once the body and family are in church, before the Funeral Mass begins. If this option is chosen, the presiding minister would greet the body and family as usual at the doors of the Church, and all would proceed into their place in the Assembly. Once the remembrance time is completed, the Gathering Hymn would begin followed by the Introductory Rites.
d. If there is a Vigil Wake in Church prior to the Funeral Mass, the remembrance could be offered at the end of the Wake, before the Funeral Mass begins. [see above letter “c”]
e. The remembrance may be offered prior to the beginning of the Committal Rite at the place of burial or entombment.
f. The remembrance may be offered after the Closing Prayer of the Funeral Mass before the Final Commendation is begun.

6. Remembrance remarks are to be simple, brief and prepared. Care must be taken to follow these required points. It is strongly recommended that any remembrance be given by one person only. What is to be avoided is the creation of a second ceremony of remembrances. Within the context of a Liturgy the tone of a remembrance should remain one of faith and hope. In the Diocese of Baton Rouge, all remembrances at a Funeral Mass or Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass should be written and shown to the Priest-Presider prior to the Funeral Rite. If this is not possible, then at the very least the person asked to give the remembrance should convey to the Priest-Presider the basic content of what is to be said. It is the responsibility of the Priest-Presider to make the decision concerning whether the remembrance will be given or not.

7. A Minister from another faith tradition is welcome to pray with the mourning community at the Funeral Rites. S/he may offer a reading of the Scriptures. S/he may also offer prayer at the Vigil Wake and at the Committal Rites. A Minister from another Church or faith tradition may not preach at a Funeral Mass.

C. Entitlement to the Ministry of the Church at the Time of Death

Every Catholic, unless specifically excluded by the norms of law, is entitled to the Church’s ministry at the time of death.

1. In coordination with the local pastoral staff, the family of the deceased and the funeral director chosen by the family arrange the place and set the time for the Vigil, the Funeral Mass and the Rite of Committal.

2. The Funeral Mass is ordinarily the central element of Catholic funerals in the Diocese of Baton Rouge. The Funeral Mass is a prayer for God’s mercy for the deceased and solace for the living, including the entire faith community.
3. Catechumens may be given Catholic Funeral Rites including the celebration of the Eucharist. The sentiments of their surviving family members, who may not be Catholic, are to be considered in a pastoral spirit.

4. Catholic Funeral Rites, including the Funeral Mass, are permitted for a deceased baptized non-Catholic who might reasonably be presumed to desire or prefer the Catholic rite. Such a decision would be appropriate when non-Catholics worship regularly in the Catholic Church or identify with the Catholic Church more than any other.

5. To foster and respect family bonds, non-Catholic members of Catholic families may be interred in a Catholic cemetery space permitting and according to the policy of the individual Catholic cemetery. Clergy of other communions may conduct the cemetery rites according to their tradition, if the family so desires or if this was expressed wish of the deceased.

6. The Church encourages the burial of Catholics in Catholic cemeteries [Canon 1180.1] Burial in the consecrated ground of a Catholic cemetery is a sign of baptismal commitment and gives witness even in death to faith in Christ’s resurrection.

7. A child who dies before baptism, or a stillborn or miscarried child may be given Catholic Funeral Rites particularly if the parents intended to have the child baptized. The remains of fetus or stillborns would always received reverent Christian burial if this is at all possible. These remains may be placed either in specific individual graves or in a common burial area.

8. The Order of Christian Funerals provides a complete funeral liturgy for children who have died [OCF #234-342]. The various texts for a baptized child or a child who died before baptism make these rites fully adapted to various situation, and offer consolation for those suffering extraordinary grief which comes with the death of a child.

9. The Church has no objection to Catholics making prior arrangements to donate their bodies or part of their bodies after certain death, to advance medical science. Upon eventual disposition of the body or its parts there would be reasonable assurance that the remains will be disposed of in a proper, reverent manner. The family of such a donor should be encouraged to celebrate a mass as soon as possible after death. Whatever remains of the body after an organ transplant or medical research should be given appropriate burial The rite of final committal with final commendation [OCF #224-233] offers a model for concluding prayers for the donor and the donor’s family.

10. Permission is granted to permit funeral rites, including the funeral Mass, for a person who died by suicide. Great pastoral sensitivity is to be used in making these funeral plans so as to console and encourage the hope of those who remain. The family of the deceased is to be consulted as part of this decision-making process.

D. The Entire Parish Faith Community’s Involvement

Since the ministry of consolation belongs to the entire Christian community, the entire
community is to be involved in caring for the dying, praying for the dead, and comforting those who mourn.

1. Regular catechesis is encouraged to help parishioners understand their role in ministering to those who have suffered the loss of a loved one.

2. Parish policies, procedures and ministerial resources are to be developed in light of these guidelines and communicated clearly to parishioners so that they can take full advantage of the services available to them at the time of death.

3. Funeral directors provide an invaluable service to families and to the Church. Often the funeral director provide the first response to a family who has experienced the death of a loved one. It is important for Parish staffs and local funeral directors to cultivate an attitude of mutual respect and effective collaboration. Annual meetings with funeral directors within a parish or deanery are encouraged. Funeral directors are encouraged to include a study of the *Order of Christian Funerals* apart of their regular in-service study, and are invited to call the Office of Worship for the Diocese for further information or resources.

### E. Ministries in the Rites of the Order of Christian Funerals

*In keeping with the norms found in the Order of Christian Funerals, priests and deacons are to share responsibility for planning and implementation of the Order with qualified lay ministers. It is the role of the Presider to organize and structure the various stations for any given Funeral Rite.*

1. Priests, ministers of comfort, preside at the funeral rites, especially Mass; the celebration of the funeral liturgy is especially entrusted to pastors and associate pastors. When no priest is available, deacons, as ministers of the Word, of the altar and of charity, preside at the Funeral rites. When on priest or deacon is available for the Vigil and related rites or the Rite of Committal a layperson leads this prayer. [OCF#14] It is the role of the Presiding Minister to organize and structure the Funeral Liturgy. Collaboration with the family of the deceased is expected and recommended.

2. The Rite, *Gathering in the Presence of the Body* [OCF#109-118], may be used if a priest, deacon, parish minister is present at the time of death, or when the family first visits the body.

3. A pastoral visit to the family by the priest celebrating the Funeral Mass is an expected part of the Church’s ministry of consolation. The ministry of a bereavement group or ministry of consolation should never substitute for the pastoral visit of the priest.

4. Part of the priest’s ministry to the grieving family may include the offer to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation. This may be appropriate when the family has not participated in worship for some time. However this does not warrant general absolution.
5. The service of all appropriate liturgical ministers is recommended in the celebration of the various liturgies of the *Order of Christian Funerals*. Laymen and laywomen may serve as readers, musicians, ushers, pallbearers, and as special ministers of Holy Communion [OCF#15].

6. The preparation of the liturgy can provide consolation for the mourners. However, the preparation of the liturgy should never become a burden for the family. The *Order of Christian Funerals* recommends that family members be involved in some of the liturgical roles, unless they prefer not to be involved [OCF #15]. Nevertheless, they might designate the persons to place the pall and appropriate symbols on the casket at the reception of the Body, as well as the persons to bring gifts of bread and wine to the altar. [OCF#152]

7. Music selected for the *Order of Christian Funerals* should be appropriate for Christian prayer and Catholic worship. The texts of music should express the paschal mystery of Christ’s passion, death and resurrection. This is especially important for the Song of Farewell. Popular non-religious songs are not to be used within the Liturgy.

8. Non-Catholic and Non-Christian ministers may participate within the *Order of Christian Funerals*: they are not allowed to Preside at a Vigil, Funeral without Mass, and the Committal Rites. At the Eucharist, Ministers of other Christian Churches and Non-Christian ministers may offer remarks after the Post-Communion Prayer. Non-Catholic and Non-Christian religious leaders, as well as civic officials, should be given seats of honor distinct from the congregation and separate from the Presiding Priest or Deacon. Questions about the participation of ministers of other faith traditions can be referred to the Chancery.

F. Scheduling the Funeral Liturgies

1. The Funeral Mass may be celebrated at any hour of the day [and may be scheduled for an early evening time ] provided the time requested by the family of the deceased secures the requested time for the entire Funeral Liturgy from both the Parish and Priest/Deacon who is being asked to conduct the various stations of the Liturgy. Each parish should develop a clear policy on funeral schedules that is shared with parishioners and local funeral directors. While local policy should take into account the daily Mass of the parish, the availability of priests, the schedule of liturgies and other parish events, sensitivity to the grieving family should be paramount in scheduling the Funeral Mass.

2. If the Funeral Mass is celebrated in the evening, a sufficient length of time should separate it from the celebration of the Vigil for the Deceased. Accordingly, the schedule for the Rite of Committal, ordinarily the next day should be announced and the faithful invited to reconvene at that time.

3. The Vigil for the Deceased should be celebrated at a convenient time. The time may be published in the newspaper obituary notice.
4. Funeral Directors are asked to respect the correct names of the various liturgical rites in written obituary notices. Proper terms such as “Vigil for the Deceased,” “Funeral Mass,” “Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass,” and “Rite of Committal” are encouraged.

5. Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer form the Office for the Dead [OCF, Part IV] may be scheduled during the time of the wake. The Office for the Dead may be celebrated in the funeral home, Church or oratory of a religious community, or in the family home.

6. Funeral Masses are not celebrated on solemnities of obligation, on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Sunday or on the Sundays of Advent, Lent and the Easter Season. If a Funeral Mass is celebrated on Ash Wednesday, ashes are not distributed.

7. On days when the Funeral Mass may not be celebrated, the appropriate Rite is the Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass except on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation. On these days, only funeral Vigil Services are permitted.

8. Although the Funeral Mass is ordinarily celebrated in the parish church to which the deceased belonged, it is possible to choose any Catholic church for the Funeral Mass, provided the pastor of that church agrees and the pastor of the deceased has been informed. The Funeral Mass may also be celebrated in chapels of Catholic long-term care institutions. The Funeral Mass may not be celebrated in any funeral home, or even in a funeral home’s chapel or cemetery chapel in the Diocese of Baton Rouge without the explicit prior permission of the local Ordinary.

9. If two or more families, or a religious community, desire it, a Funeral Mass may be celebrated for more than one person.

10. The Funeral Mass may be celebrated at one of the regularly scheduled daily Masses in the parish. Particularly in instances where the deceased does not have a large family or circle of friends, presence of the daily Mass community is greatly consoling to the mourners. A core group of readers, ministers of Holy Communion, a funeral choir, and servers may emerge from the daily mass community.

G. The Vigil

The Vigil [often referred to as the Wake] is often the first time family, friends, and members of the parish community gather in remembrance of the deceased to offer prayer and support. The Vigil may be celebrated in the home of the deceased, in the funeral home, or in the Church.

1. During the wake-visitation, the Vigil for the Deceased is the principal rite celebrated by the Church in the time following death and before the Funeral Liturgy. The practice of scheduling a specific hour for the Vigil for the Deceased is encouraged in order for more of the faithful to participate in this liturgy. Devotions such as the rosary are laudable prayer to be done, but should be done at other times during the wake. The Rosary should never replace the Vigil for the Deceased in the Order for Christian funerals.
2. The Vigil for the Deceased may provide a chance to take part in the funeral rites for those unable to participate in the Funeral Mass or Rite of Committal.

3. When no priest or deacon is available, it is permissible for a trained lay minister to be designated by the pastor to preside at the Vigil for the Deceased, providing the person has been formed in an understanding of the *Order of Christian Funerals* and is also skilled in leading public prayer.

4. After the Prayer of Intercession or at some other suitable time during the Vigil, it is appropriate for a family member or a friend to speak in remembrance of the deceased [OCF#62].

5. When the Vigil for the Deceased is celebrated in a church, a priest or deacon is to be vested in an alb and stole. A lay minister who leads the Vigil prayer wears lay clothing in accord with the dignity of the role.

6. When a wake takes place in the Church the Vigil for the Deceased with Reception at the Church [OCF#82] is to be celebrated.

7. Particular groups may be invited to celebrate a prayer service for the deceased in addition to the Vigil for the Deceased or there may be distinct times of prayer within the wake. The Liturgy of the Hours, from the Office for the Dead, [OCF, Part IV] provides a form of a Vigil for the Deceased. Morning prayer from the Office might also be celebrated on the day of committal, following an evening Funeral Mass. The Rosary may be recited but should not replace the Vigil for the Deceased.

8. The presence of a cantor or other music ministers at the Vigil for the Deceased can be helpful in leading the people in prayer, particularly in the singing of the psalms and the responses of the liturgy.

**H. The Funeral Mass**

In the Dioceses of the United States, the principal rituals in the *Order of Christian Funerals* are the Vigil [Wake] for the Deceased, the Funeral Mass, and the Rite of Committal. The Funeral Mass is the central liturgy of the Christian funeral in the Diocese of Baton Rouge. *If the Funeral Mass is not possible during the days of the Funeral Rites, Mass with the family of the deceased may be scheduled at a later date.*

1. The Eucharist is the heart of the Paschal reality of Christian death [Catechism of the Catholic Church #1689] Pastors should provide for the formation of the Parish community in the central importance of the Eucharist for the Funeral of a loved one. If the Eucharist is not possible on the day of the Funeral, a later celebration of the Eucharist can be scheduled with the family and friends of the deceased. In the celebration of the Eucharist, the Church most perfectly expresses
communion with those who have died. The celebration of the Eucharist at the funeral is an opportunity for the community of the faithful, and for the family, ‘to learn to live in communion with the one who has fallen asleep in the Lord, by communicating the Body and Blood of Christ of which s/he is a living member, and then, by praying for him/her and with him/her.’ [Catechism of the Catholic Church #1689]

2. The Introductory Rites of the Funeral Mass presume a greeting of the mourners who accompany the body to the doors of the Church. They are greeted by the priest and liturgical ministers, and other persons who have gathered at the Church to await the procession from the funeral home or family home. The ritual plan for a parish must take into account the structure of the liturgy, the size of the assembly and the architecture of the church.

3. The Liturgy of the Word as given in the Lectionary provides a wealth of Scriptures which may be selected for the circumstances surrounding the death of a Christian. Priests and Deacons are urged to take full advantage of this option in preparing the Funeral Mass and not limit their selection of readings to an unchanging set.

4. If the Vigil is held in a place not in Church, and the remains are brought to the Church for the Funeral Liturgy, it is not ordinarily possible to seat the family members who accompany the remains before the remains are presented for the funeral liturgy. Parishes are called upon to develop, in collaboration with funeral directors, policies which result in seating on both sides of the church and towards the front of the assembly area.

I. The Funeral Liturgy Outside Mass

*It is the custom in the United States for a priest or deacon to preside at the funeral liturgy when it celebrated outside of Mass.*

1. The Funeral Liturgy Outside mass [OCF#177-203] is celebrated when a Mass is not possible or is not deemed appropriate. It is ordinarily celebrated in the parish church, but it may also be celebrated in the funeral home, the home of the deceased or cemetery chapel. [OCF#179] The pastoral advice of the parish priest is essential in determining what is appropriate.

2. The family may choose to celebrate a funeral outside of mass, and schedule a memorial Mass at a later date, when it determined in consultation with the parish priest that this form of the funeral liturgy is a more suitable form of celebration.

3. When the funeral liturgy is celebrated outside of Mass, the community nonetheless gathers to hear the message of Easter hope proclaimed in the Liturgy of the Word and to commend the deceased to God.

4. The readings are chosen from those approved for Masses for the Dead. The *Order of Christian Funerals* provides ample selections to choose from for the Funeral liturgy of an adult or child.
Pastors should encourage the family to choose from the wide variety of reading options for the various stations of the Rite.

5. Although the Order of Christian Funerals includes the possibility of Holy Communion in this form of the Liturgy, this practice is not encouraged in the Diocese of Baton Rouge.

6. Music is an essential element of this form of celebration, which includes the Gathering song, the Responsorial Psalm, the Gospel Acclamation, and especially the Song of Farewell at the Final Commendation.

J. The Rite of Committal

The Rite of Committal is celebrated at the place of burial or internment and never in the Church.

1. The Rite of Committal, whether at an internment chapel, a mausoleum or a grave side, is the prayer said at this gathering of the faithful.

2. Military services and certain cultural or social rites are permissible at the cemetery. These others services should be arranged in advance with the local parish priest and coordinated in such a way as they do not disrupt or distract form the integrity of the liturgical Committal service. Thus, these other services should take place either before the Committal Rites or afterwards. This should be determined in collaboration with the priest or deacon who is presiding; of there is no priest or deacon, the layperson who leads this prayer. Funeral directors are called upon to assist in the coordination of these elements, and to safeguard the integrity of the Church’s liturgy at the Rite of Committal.

3. If a lengthy time has passed since the celebration of the Funeral Liturgy, or if the funeral has been conducted overseas or in a distant state, the Rite of Committal with Final Commendation [OCF #224-233] may be more appropriate.

K. Cremation

While the Church recommends that the pious custom of burying the bodies of the dead be observed, cremation is permitted as long as it has not been chosen for reasons contrary to Catholic teaching [Canon 1176.3, Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2301]

1. It is preferred that the Funeral Mass of the Funeral Liturgy be celebrated in the presence of the body of the deceased prior to its cremation. [OCF Appendix Cremation, #411-438]

2. The significance of having the body of the deceased present for the funeral liturgy is indicated throughout the mass texts and ritual actions. Therefore, when arrangements involving cremation are being made, the parish priest is to recommend that:
a. following a wake or time of visitation, the Funeral Liturgy be celebrated in the presence of the body of the deceased person, and that following the Funeral Liturgy, the body of the deceased be cremated.
b. the Funeral Mass conclude with a Final Commendation in the Church
c. at an appropriate time, usually some days later, the family gather at the cemetery for the burial of the cremated remains. The Rite of Committal takes place at this time with the inclusion of the proper prayers for the committal of ashes [OCF#406.3]

3. If cremation has already taken place before the Funeral Liturgy, the Pastor may permit the celebration of the Funeral Liturgy in the presence of the cremated remains of the deceased person. The cremated remains of the body are to be placed in a worthy vessel. Parishes may wish to invest in a parish ossuary [a receptacle in which the funeral urn or box is placed.] A small table or stand is to be prepared for the cremated remains at the place normally occupied by the coffin. The funeral urn or ossuary may be carried to its place in the entrance procession or placed on this table sometime before the Liturgy begins.

4. Special circumstances occur, such as health concerns or out of state or overseas transport, which prompt families to arrange for cremation before making funeral arrangements. If cremation has taken place, the parish priest is to recommend:
   a. a gathering with family and friends for prayer in remembrance of the deceased
   b. the celebration of the Funeral Liturgy
   c. gathering with the family and friends for the interment of cremated remains at the cemetery of mausoleum in the Rite of Committal.

5. Cremated remains should be treated with the same respect given to the remains for a human body, and should be entombed or buried, whether in the ground or at sea. The scattering of cremated remains on the ground or on the sea or keeping any portion of them for personal reasons is not the reverent final disposition that the Church directs. It should be noted that burial at sea of cremated remains differs from scattering. An appropriate and worthy container, heavy enough to be sent to its final resting place, may be dropped into the sea.

L. Music in the Funeral Liturgy

It is the pastoral responsibility of parishes to provide liturgical music at all Funeral Masses. The same liturgical norms applied to music at any Mass apply to the Funeral Mass.

1. An instrumentalist, a cantor, and even a choir where possible should assist the full participation by the Assembly in the songs, responses, and acclamations of the funeral Rites [OCF#33]. It would be considered extraordinary for recorded music to be used at a Funeral Mass and every effort should be made to secure a musician and cantor for the Funeral Mass. In areas of the diocese where it is impossible to secure a musician and cantor, the pastor makes the judgement as to the music used for the Liturgy. In this situation, a parish may choose to develop an “a capella” repertoire of very familiar songs and hymns for use at a Funeral.
2. Certain musical texts are primary and should be sung at the Funeral Mass: the Responsorial Psalm, the Gospel Acclamation, the Three acclamations of the Eucharistic Prayer, the “Lamb of God’ litany, and the “Song of Farewell.” These should not be sung by cantor, choir or alone. Rather, these belong to the Assembly and the Assembly should be encouraged to especially sing these parts.

3. In the Order of Christian Funerals, as in all the reformed liturgical books, the cantor/leader of song has an important task. The task of the cantor is to animate and direct the singing of the Assembly. With the exception of the Responsorial Psalm, which is sung from the Ambo, the cantor ordinarily leads the Assembly from a cantor stand.

4. Some form of hymnal or worship program is called for at funerals. The program might be a computer generated document with the words and music of the liturgy. Copyright licenses and permission are necessary, and many parishes have found that annual licenses to be both convenient and inexpensive. Some liturgical publishers have offered participation cards and booklets for the liturgy that have proven very useful. A separate sheet might be prepared for the participation of the faithful in the Committal Rites at the cemetery or mausoleum.

5. A choir has proven of great worth in many parishes. Members of a funeral choir are often recruited from parishioners who are retired, self-employed, or whose work gives them freedom of schedule.

6. The selection of music for the funeral liturgy is often a sensitive issue for bereaved families, pastoral musicians and pastoral staff. The choice of music for Christian funerals must be in accord with the recommendations governing music in liturgy, especially those found in the Order of Christian Funerals, Liturgical Music Today, and Music in Catholic Worship.

7. The principle of progressive solemnity, described in Music in Catholic Worship, applies to the ritual found in the Order of Christian Funerals. Some few things sung well, as described in #2 above, have priority at funeral liturgies [Liturgical Music Today,#33]. Many of these may be drawn from the repertoire of the Sunday Assembly.

8. The Responsorial form of psalm singing, in which the psalmist or choir sings the verses and the Assembly responds with a brief antiphon, is well suited to the funeral liturgy. The practice of substituting metrical hymns based on psalm texts for the Responsorial Psalm is not encouraged since this form affects and alters the ritual pattern of Responsorial singing. [Liturgical Music Today, #40]

9. The request for “favorite songs” of the deceased can often result in inappropriate performances of music incapable of bearing the weight liturgy demands. Popular songs, sentimental ethnic music or songs from Broadway hits are not to substitute for the music of the funeral Mass. There are the standards of judgment proposed in Music in Catholic Worship. The liturgical judgement: is the music’s text, form, placement and style congruent with the nature of the liturgy? [MCW 30-38] The musical judgement: is the music technically, aesthetically and expressively good
irrespective of the musical idiom or style? [MCW 26-29] The pastoral judgement: will it help this Assembly to pray? [MCW 39-41] Such a process may not be as easy to apply as an absolute list of permitted or prohibited music, but it is more effective pastorally. Some music requested which may not be appropriate for the funeral Mass might be suggested for the Vigil or the Committal. Some music requested which may not be appropriate for the funeral Mass could be done before the liturgy begins.

10. Music is preeminent among the signs expressed by the participants in any liturgy. Therefore, recorded music should not be the usual manner in which music is used within the liturgy to replace the congregation, the choir, the organ or piano, the cantor, or other musicians. [Liturgical Music Today] However, in areas of the Diocese where securing a musician and cantor for a Funeral Mass is impossible, the pastor will make the judgement as to the kind of music used.