

As a deacon at Our Lady of the Rosary, I am responsible for preparing parents for the baptism of their child as well as planning a funeral for a person who has passed away. Each of these ministries are rewarding because they allow a family to be drawn into the beauty and grace of God's bountiful love. Yes, funerals can be challenging, especially when a person's death is unexpected or for someone who is young. But it allows a family to do the most important thing they can do, which is to offer a Requiem (funeral) Mass for the repose of their loved one's soul which in turn strengthens them in their time of grief.

Typically, I am contacted by a funeral home to inform me of the passing of a person. But there are times when I work directly with the family on what is needed for funeral planning. The key is being flexible with schedules and what the family is looking for while guiding the family on what is required by the Catholic Church regarding the proper committal of the body or cremated remains to its final resting place. This is important because people are not only offered different options for a funeral but may not be aware of the Church's teachings for a funeral. Once the details have been finalized, I then work with the clergy and various parish staff members to ensure the family's requests have been fulfilled for their loved one.

On the other side of the spectrum is the birth of a child. This is truly a joyous time because the love of two married people created a new life. In my role I ensure that the family requesting the baptism has been properly catechized on the Church's teaching on the sacrament. This catechesis allows the parents to be drawn into the profoundness of baptism and how it removes their child's original sin, allows them to become an adopted child of God, receive the Holy Spirit, and be joined to the body of the Christ his Holy Catholic Church. Wow! What an incredible gift parents give their child by allowing them to receive the sacrament of baptism. A gift that is not only temporal, but for all eternity.

Additionally, I go through the rite of baptism with the parents to review what takes place during the baptism and the importance of professing the faith of the Church their child is being baptized in. Assisting in the ministries of baptism and funeral planning is truly a blessing because it allows people to grow deeper into the mystery and grace of God's unfathomable love whether it be at the start of a loved one's life or at its end. God bless.

Deacon Mike