

TO BE CONSIDERED BY THAT PERSON WHO HAS LOST SOMEONE DEEPLY LOVED

The following is an outline of steps to be followed at the time of death:

1. Call you Clergy; their experience and concern for you can be very helpful.
2. Locate any document prepared by the deceased that indicates their wishes as to Christian burial. If such a document does not exist, or cannot be found, give thought to the following:
 - a. Would you like to have an autopsy?
 - b. Do you, or did the deceased, want cremation? (The Church has no prohibition against cremation.) Do you, or the deceased, want the body or parts of the body donated to medical science?
 - c. Choose a funeral director (the clergy can be helpful in recommending someone). Call the firm, and ask that they take the body in custody and await further word on your plans.
 - d. Think about the kind of service you desire. Will body or ashes be present, or will it be a Memorial Service? Do you want the Burial Office only, or the Holy Eucharist, too? Hymns? What psalms, lessons and prayers? The proper place for a baptized Christian to be buried is from the Church. It is from the Church that we begin our life in Baptism and it is from the Church at death that we are committed into God's eternal care.
3. Ask the following questions:
 - a. Is there a plot? Where? Who owns it? Where is the recording document?
 - b. If you need to buy a plot, where will it be and how many spaces will you need?
 - c. What kind of casket or urn do you want?
 - d. If there are to be ashes, what will be their disposition? (For Communicants in good standing of St. Mary's Church, ashes can be scattered in St. Mary's Church Yard.)
4. Determine whether or not you will have visiting hours at the funeral home. Give some thought to both the length and frequency of calling hours to minimize wear and tear on the bereaved. Unfortunately, one must consider the security of the deceased's home at the time of both calling hours and the funeral service.

5. Will it be closed casket or open? At the Church the casket is closed and covered with either a pall or a flag.
6. Who should be notified? Who will phone or write them? (Get a pad and make a list)
7. Who is apt to come from a distance and has the scheduling of the service taken this into consideration?
8. Decide on "Memorial gifts may be sent to..." It is often wise to choose two organizations, one church-related and one secular (community, medical research, health or educational institutions) to provide persons with strong feelings a clear option.
9. Decide on two or three persons to go and see the funeral director to make arrangements, choose casket or urn, and clarify clothing questions for the deceased. Expensive caskets are extravagant and use of flowers should be avoided. (It would be helpful to take this work sheet with you.) As well, the following information will be helpful:
 - a. Full name (#1 on form)
 - b. Date and place of birth (#2 on form)
 - c. Father's full name (#3 on form)
 - d. Mother's full name (including her maiden name) (#4 on form)
 - e. Survived by (identify spouse and children by name, number of grandchildren; names of sisters, brothers, others). (#5 on form)
 - f. Memberships (#6 on form)
 - g. Names of newspapers (see #7 on form & note directions). It usually takes 3 days to get this notice into The Washington Post. Check - it may be cheaper to do yourself than having the funeral home place it for you.
 - h. Social security number (#8 on form)
 - i. Military serial or service number and location of DDE214 or equivalent (#9 & 9a on form).
10. While above two or three persons proceed to the funeral director's office, others start notifying family and friends.
11. Select pallbearers and decide on who will call them.