



THE BASILICA OF SAINT MARY ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

Policy Regarding “Words of Remembrance” (Eulogy)

Our ministry to those who are grieving is one of our most important ministries. Central to this is the Rite of Christian Burial celebrated with the family and friends of the deceased. In order to personalize this liturgy we meet with the family and select the readings and music together. Often the question is asked if it is permissible for a family member or friend to give a eulogy. This note is intended to address this question.

The Catholic Church does not allow “eulogies” within the context of the liturgy. The most appropriate place for these is during the visitation at the Funeral Home the night before, or at a reception following the Funeral Mass. Nevertheless, occasionally allowance is made for “Words of Remembrance” to be offered by a family member or a friend at the end of the service. These “Words of Remembrance,” do not seek to canonize the decedent but highlight his/her Christian faith, hope and love.

Guidelines for “Words of Remembrance” at The Basilica of Saint Mary:

1. The text should always be written out beforehand.
2. The “Words of Remembrance” should be brief. They should not exceed 8 minutes in total. Read at an appropriate pace this translates to about 500 words.
3. The content should cover what was most beloved about the deceased, including his/her Christian faith, hope and love.
4. The family ought to select one person to read the “Words of Remembrance.”
5. This person should be the one most likely to maintain composure.
6. Profanity or unseemly anecdotes have no place in the “Words of Remembrance.”
7. “Words of Remembrance” should simply be read, and not be accompanied by music or video presentations.
8. The pastor and/or celebrant should be given the text before the funeral to give final approval.

Revised 6/18/2018