

# G.R.A.C.E.

## *Topic for October: Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell*

### ***When Someone You Love is Dying***

- Don't avoid the person.
- Allow the person to talk about death and life after death.
- Encourage the person to talk to a priest. Deacons and lay ministers are also available to listen to and pray with the person during this time.
- Touch the person. Holding someone's hand can be calming and reassuring.
- Allow the person to talk about the past. Don't stifle expressions of regret. Encourage attempts to forgive or be forgiven.
- If the person experiences visions or voices of Jesus or people who have died, do not contradict or try to explain it away. Your inability to see or hear does not mean that what is happening is not real.
- Don't hide your emotions. Cry with the person. Laugh with the person.
- Recognize that talking is not always necessary. Be still. Be silent.
- Pray for the person.
- Ask the person to pray for you now and after death.
- When it is time to say goodbye, assure the person of your love, your gratitude, and your forgiveness.
- The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick should be offered to anyone who is seriously ill and can be administered anytime during illness.
- Viaticum (food for the journey) is the Holy Eucharist given at the very end of life as spiritual food for one's passing from this world to the Father.

*Adapted from Our Sunday Visitor, "What the Church Teaches - Death and Life after Death", Lorene Hanley Duquin*



*No man enters heaven all by himself. We  
either bring others in with us or we are  
brought in by others."  
Thomas Merton*

It is our personal responsibility to maintain good health in response to God's generous gift of life. However, we need to be able to recognize our limitations and let go when our time on earth is coming to an end. We are not compelled to do anything aggressive in the end stages of life.



After death, we pray for the deceased person and for the mourners throughout this difficult time. We believe that we are a communion of saints and therefore are still all connected, even after death.

The Church prefers the burial of the body but does allow cremation. In cases where cremation is planned, the Church urges that if at all possible, the body be present for the funeral Mass with cremation taking place afterwards. However, if cremation takes place before the funeral Mass, the cremated remains can be brought into the Church for funeral rites.

A Catholic funeral consists of:

- A wake which would include a vigil service that incorporates scripture into the prayer with and for the deceased person and mourners. This vigil is designed so as to include time for mourners to share stories and memories of the deceased.
- A funeral mass which takes place at the church with a chance for the body to lie in state before the liturgy begins. This is the celebration of the deceased person's life and furthers the prayers for that person as they enter eternal life.
- A committal of the body and prayers over the final resting place. This is conducted at the cemetery.

“On this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the web that is woven over all nations, he will destroy death forever. The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces...”  
Isaiah 25:7-8

“Jesus cried out in a loud voice, ‘Father, into your hands I commend my spirit’; and when he had said this he breathed his last.”  
Luke 23:46

“Return, my soul, to your rest; the Lord has been good to you. For my soul has been freed from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living.”  
Psalm 116 7-9

“Death is swallowed up in victory.  
Where, O death, is your victory?  
Where, O death, is your sting?”  
1 Corinthians 15:55



“Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Behold, the place where they laid him.”  
Mark 16: 6

“We cannot be united with God unless we freely choose to love him. But we cannot love God if we sin gravely against him, against our neighbor or against ourselves.”  
Catechism of the Catholic Church 1033

Blessed are those who have died in the Lord; let them rest from their labors for their good deeds go with them. Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord.  
*Response: And let perpetual light shine upon him/her.*  
May he/she rest in peace.  
*Response: Amen.*  
May his/her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.  
*Response: Amen.*  
From Order of Christian Funerals,  
Concluding Rite

“At the end of time, the Kingdom of God will come in its fullness. After the universal judgment, the righteous will reign for ever with Christ, glorified in body and soul. The universe itself will be renewed.”  
Catechism of the Catholic Church 1042

“For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.”  
2 Corinthians 5:1

“Shepherd me,  
O God, beyond  
my wants, beyond  
my fears, from  
death into life.”  
Adapted from  
Psalm 23

“This perfect life with the Most Holy Trinity—this communion of life and love with the Trinity, with the Virgin Mary, the angels and all the blessed—is called “heaven.”  
Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness.”  
Catechism of the Catholic Church  
1024