

Words of Remembrance

A Guide for Speakers at the Funeral Liturgy

You have been invited to offer words of remembrance at the Funeral Liturgy. This is a great honor and responsibility. Please note that this is taking place in the context of Divine Worship. It is a sacred time and place where our primary purpose is to commend our beloved to the mercy and love of our Lord Jesus Christ. Any words must both respect and reflect this sacred character.

The words you share should reflect the virtue and goodness of the person. It is not the time to speak of bad habits or less than honorable experiences, even if they seem humorous. While humor is fine, it should be done in good taste and dignity. Other times and places may be more suited to telling stories and jokes about a person.

The following guide is intended to help you plan your remembrance and to deliver it well.

- ❖ Words of remembrance should be three-five minutes. *It is very important that you respect this policy.*
- ❖ It is an emotional and difficult task to limit one's words, as memories flow freely and easily. Therefore, prepare your remembrance in writing not to exceed five minutes.
- ❖ Choose one or two memories that capture the virtue and character of the person.
- ❖ You may share common memories of the person but it is not the place to speak for every person's memories or give a chronology of the person's life.
- ❖ Speak sincerely and respectfully, reflecting your experience.
- ❖ Avoid using "inside jokes" or forms of humor which may be misunderstood, or sharing incidents not widely known, which may cause confusion or hurt.
- ❖ Choose one trusted advisor who also knew the deceased, and use this person as a "sounding board" when you prepare your remembrance.
- ❖ Show your written remembrance to the priest the night before the funeral, at the latest. He may offer helpful comments on the text.
- ❖ Pray that you will do honor to your loved one's memory, and that your words will be a witness to faith, and a blessing to family and friends.
- ❖ If you have been asked to offer a remembrance, but are unaccustomed to public speaking, or are concerned that your emotions may hinder your ability to speak, do not hesitate to respectfully decline this task.