



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK

Guidelines for *Words of Remembrance*

"I am the resurrection and the life, whoever believes in me will live forever." (John 11:25)

To the family member or friend who will be delivering *Words of Remembrance* at a funeral liturgy: Please accept the condolences of the pastor and parish staff as you mourn the passing of your loved one from this world.

The family has entrusted you with a sacred task in asking you to "speak in remembrance" of the departed on their behalf. The following guidelines are provided to help you prepare and deliver your remarks.

To "speak in remembrance" at a funeral liturgy means to offering a brief reflection on the life of the deceased in the context of his or her life of faith. These liturgical *Words of Remembrance* are not the same as the secular understanding of a "eulogy," which is a reminiscing and toasting of the departed.

In preparing *Words of Remembrance*, it might be helpful to reflect on the qualities of the deceased that made him or her a good person. A brief story or example could help to illustrate a particular point.

Past experience has made it necessary for the parish to require funeral speakers to adhere strictly to the following guidelines. These are designed to respect the sacredness of the ceremony as well as the dignity of the deceased.

- **Only one person may deliver the *Words of Remembrance* at the funeral liturgy.**
- **The celebrant will call you forward by name after the prayer after communion.**
- **At no time is it acceptable to use crude language or engage in actions that are disrespectful of the sacred place, the ceremony or the deceased.**
- **The spoken *Words of Remembrance* cannot exceed three or four minutes in length – the basic equivalent of a single typed page. Please rehearse and time yourself prior to the funeral.**
- **It is advisable to review what you plan to say with another person, even the priest or pastoral minister who is assisting in the funeral preparation.**

Keep in mind that there are other opportunities, such as the wake or repast, when lengthier and more personal memories to be shared. Thank you for your cooperation to assure a dignified celebration of the liturgy and the life of the deceased. Once again, please know of our sincere sympathy during this time of loss.