

Memo

Date: February 14, 2013
To: All Clergy
From:  Wilton D. Gregory, *Archbishop of Atlanta*
Re: Eulogy at a Funeral Mass Decree

At several of our recent Presbyteral Council meetings the subject of eulogies at Funeral liturgies was brought before the Council for discussion. As a result of considerable conversation on the subject it was requested that we clarify the role of these “Words of Remembrance” and the “Eulogy” by introducing a protocol to specifically address this matter for Funeral liturgies celebrated within the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

Subsequent to consulting with colleagues in the Archdiocese of Boston [where the same matter had previously been discussed at Priest Council meetings and a resultant protocol established] I shared and discussed with my Presbyteral Council a proposed response based on the Boston policies.

Therefore, having heard the Presbyteral Council, I am pleased to announce, and I hereby promulgate the attached Decree: Norms for the Words of Remembrance [sometimes designated as a Eulogy at Funeral Liturgies].

DECREE

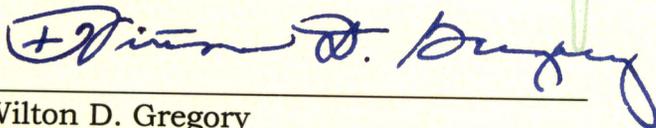
**Promulgating Norms for the Words of Remembrance
Sometimes Referred to as a Eulogy at a Funeral Mass**

The Order of Christian Funerals provides for the possibility of “a member or a friend of the family speaking in remembrance of the deceased before the final commendation begins” (Order of Christian Funerals, #197). These words are to express appreciation for the life of the deceased, or take the form of a prayer or other inspirational text rather than a traditional eulogy. Only one family member or friend is to speak, and he or she is to be brief, speaking no more than five minutes.

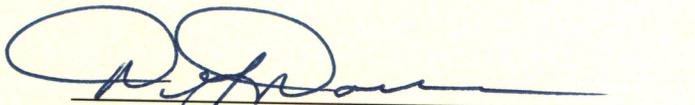
Because of the intensity of emotions at the time of a Funeral, the “words of remembrance” should be consigned to writing. To ensure that these words are in harmony with the celebration, the script should be given to the priest celebrant at an agreed upon time in advance of the Funeral liturgy, so that he can make any suitable suggestions to help the “words of remembrance” convey the consolation of God’s love, grace, and mercy. These words are intended to particularize the praise of God and gratitude to Him for His gifts to the deceased, especially the gift of the Christian life.

In the Archdiocese of Atlanta, it is recommended that those who wish to offer Words of Remembrance or to share stories about the deceased might more fittingly do so during the Vigil for the Deceased, or at the Committal. A biography of the deceased could be included in the printed worship aid, if one is prepared for the Funeral liturgy.

Given at Atlanta, on the 4th day of February, in the year of Our Lord two thousand and thirteen.



†Wilton D. Gregory
Archbishop of Atlanta


Chancellor

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