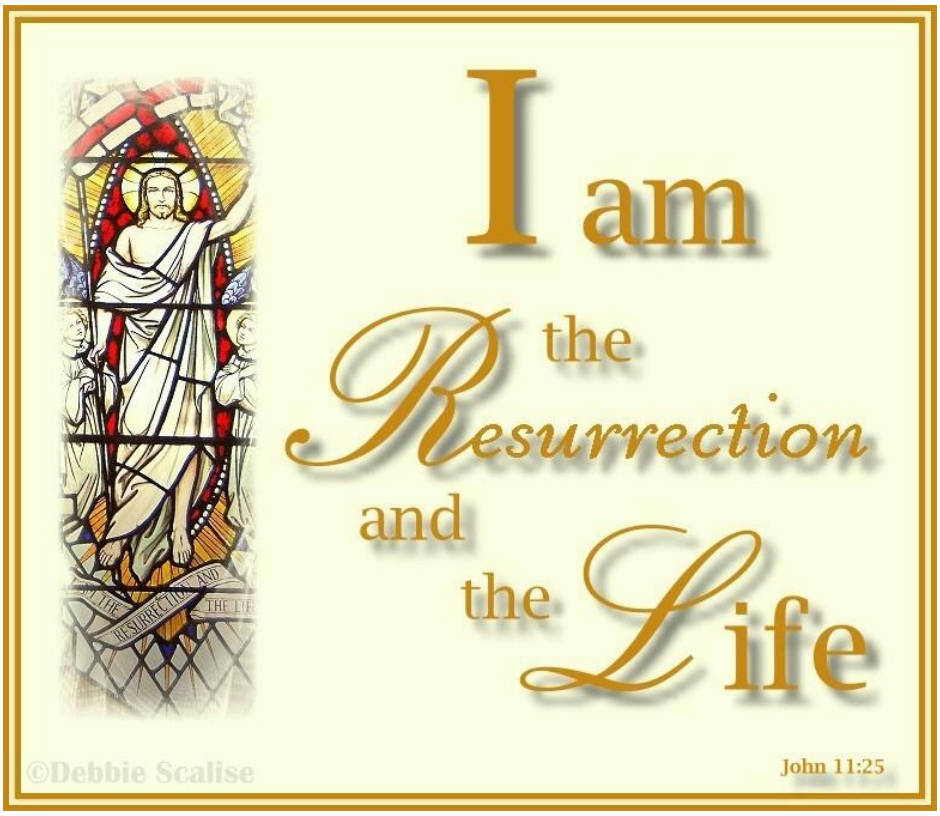
Parish of Loughgilly

Funeral Mass Planner Guide



PLEASE RETURN TO THE PRIEST AFTER USE.

Readings, Prayers of the Faithful and Reflections for use at Funerals

We give back to you, O God, those whom you gave to us.
You did not lose them when you gave them to us, and we do not lose them by their return to you.
Your dear Son has taught us that life is eternal and love cannot die. So death is only a horizon, a horizon is only the limit of our sight.
Open our eyes to see more clearly, draw us closer to you that we may know that we are nearer to our loved ones, who are with you. You have told us that you are preparing a place for us: prepare us also for that happy place, that where you are we may be always.
O dear Lord of life and death"

How to use this booklet:

This booklet has been prepared to assist you in the planning of your loved ones funeral. The main parts of the funeral that you should plan are as follows:

Entrance Offertory (Personal items belonging to your loved one)

First Reading (From the Old Testament)

Psalm (The Psalm may be read or sung)

Second Reading (From the New Testament)

Gospel Acclamation (May be read or Sung)

Prayers of the Faithful (4-6 Prayers should be chosen)

Communion Offertory (Only the Bread and Wine should be offered at this time)

Communion Reflection

The Priests of the Parish will be glad to discuss any aspect of the Funeral Liturgy with you. It is our wish that the Liturgy will be a time of prayer for your loved one and of consolation and hope for you.

FIRST READING OPTIONS
Readings from the Old Testament

1.

A reading from the Book of Wisdom (3,1-9)

The souls of the virtuous are in the hands of God,
no torment shall ever touch them.
In the eyes of the unwise, they did appear to die,
their going looked like a disaster,
their leaving us, like annihilation;
but they are in peace.
If they experienced punishment as men see it,
their hope was rich with immortality;
slight was their affliction, great will their blessings be.
God has put them to the test
and proved them worthy to be with him;
he has tested them like gold in a furnace,
and accepted them as a holocaust.
When the time comes for his visitation they will shine out;
as sparks run through the stubble, so will they.
They shall judge nations, rule over peoples,
and the Lord will be their king for ever.
They who trust in him will understand the truth,
those who are faithful will live with him in love;
for grace and mercy await those he has chosen.

The word of the Lord.

2.

A reading from the Book of Job (19,1.23-27)

Job said:
'Ah, would that these words of mine were written down, inscribed on some monument
with iron chisel and engraving tool,
cut into the rock for ever.
This I know: that my Avenger lives,
and he, the Last, will take his stand on earth.
After my awaking, he will set me close to him,
and from my flesh I shall look on God.
He whom I shall see will take my part:
these eyes will gaze on him and find him not aloof.'

The word of the Lord.

3.

A Reading from the Book of Lamentations (3,17-26)

My soul is shut out from peace;
I have forgotten happiness.
And now I say, 'My strength is gone,
that hope which came from the Lord'.
Brooding on my anguish and affliction is gall and wormwood.
My spirit ponders it continually
and sinks within me.
This is what I shall tell my heart,
and so recover hope:
the favours of the Lord are not all past, his kindnesses are not exhausted; every morning they are renewed; great is his faithfulness.
'My portion is the Lord' says my soul 'and so I will hope in him.'
The Lord is good to those who trust him, to the soul that searches for him.
It is good to wait in silence
for the Lord to save.

The word of the Lord.

4.

A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes (3,1-8)

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven:
A time to be born and a time to die,
A time to plant and a time to uproot,
A time to kill and a time to heal,
A time to tear down and a time to build,
A time to weep and a time to laugh,
A time to mourn and a time to dance,
A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
A time to embrace and a time to refrain,
A time to search and a time to give up,
A time to keep and a time to throw away,
A time to tear and a time to mend,
A time to be silent and a time to speak,
A time to love and a time to hate,
A time for war and a time for peace.

The word of the Lord

5.

A reading from the book of Wisdom (Wis 1: 13-15)

Death was never of God's fashioning; not for his pleasure does life cease to be. What meant his creation, but that all created things should have being? No breed has he created on earth but for its thriving; none carries in itself the seeds of its own destruction. Think not that mortality holds sway on earth; no end nor term is fixed to a life well lived.

The word of the Lord.

6.

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah. (12,2-6)

Truly, God is my salvation,
I trust, I shall not fear,
for the Lord is my strength, my song,
he became my Saviour.
With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.
Give thanks to the Lord; give praise to his name!
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples!
Declare the greatness of his name!
Sing a psalm to the Lord,
for he has done glorious deeds,
make them known to all the earth!
People of Zion, sing and shout for joy
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

The word of the Lord.

7.

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah (49,8.14-16)

Thus says the Lord: "In a time of favour I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you". But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me, my Lord has forgotten me".
"Can a woman forget her child at the breast, or show no compassion for the child of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Look, I have written your name on the palm of my hand."

The word of the Lord.

8.

A Reading from the Book of Wisdom (4,7-15)

The virtuous man, though he die before his time, will find rest.
Length of days is not what makes age honourable,
nor number of years the true measure of life;
understanding, this is man's grey hairs,
untarnished life, this is ripe old age.
He has sought to please God, so God has loved him;
as he was living among sinners, he has been taken up.
He has been carried off so that evil may not warp his understanding
or treachery seduce his soul;
for the fascination of evil throws good things into the shade,
and the whirlwind of desire corrupts a simple heart.
Coming to perfection in so short a while, he achieved long life;
his soul being pleasing to the Lord,
he has taken him quickly from the wickedness around him.
Yet people look on, uncomprehending;
it does not enter their heads
that grace and mercy await the chosen of the Lord, and protection, his holy ones.

The word of the Lord.

9.

A reading from the Prophet Daniel (12,1-3)

At that time Michael will stand up, the great prince who mounts guard over your people. There is going to be a time of great distress, unparalleled since nations first came into existence. When that time comes, your own people will be spared, all those whose names are found written in the Book. Of those who lie sleeping in the dust of the earth many will awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting disgrace. The learned will shine as brightly as the vault of heaven, and those who have instructed many in virtue, as bright as the stars for all eternity.

The word of the Lord.

10.

A reading from the second book of Maccabees (12,43-45)

Judas, the leader of the Jews, took a collection from the people individually, amounting to nearly two thousand drachmae, and sent it to Jerusalem to have a sacrifice for sin offered, an altogether fine and noble action, in which he took full account of the resurrection. For if he had not expected the fallen to rise it would have been 'superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead, whereas if he had in view the splendid recompense reserved for those who make a pious end, the thought was holy and devout. This was why he had this atonement sacrifice offered for the dead, so that they might be released from their sin.

The word of the Lord.

11.

A reading from the second book of Samuel (19,1-5)

King David went up to the room over the gate and burst into tears, and weeping said, "My son Absalom! My son! My son Absalom! Would I had died in your place! Absalom, my son, my son!" Word was brought to Joab, "The king is now weeping and mourning for Absalom". And the day's victory was turned to mourning for all the troops, because they learned that the king was grieving for his son. And the troops returned stealthily that day to the town, as troops creep back ashamed when routed in battle. The king had veiled his face and was crying aloud, "My son Absalom! Absalom, my son, my son!"

The word of the Lord

12.

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah (25,6-9)

On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will prepare for all peoples
a banquet of rich food.
On this mountain he will remove the mourning veil covering all peoples,
and the shroud enwrapping all nations,
he will destroy Death for ever.
The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek;
he will take away his people's shame everywhere on earth,
for the Lord has said so.
That day it will be said: See this is our God
in who we hoped for salvation;
the Lord is the one in whom we hoped.
We exult and we rejoice that he has saved us.

The word of the Lord.

13.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah. (41:8-10,13-14)

The Lord God says this:

You, Israel, my servant,
Jacob, whom I have chosen,
the offspring of Abraham, my friend;
you whom I took from the ends of the earth,
and called from its farthest corners,
saying to you, "You are my servant,
I have chosen you and not cast you off".

Do not fear, for I am with you,
do not be afraid, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you.
For I, the Lord your God, hold your right hand;
it is I who say to you, "Do not fear, I will help you."
Your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.

The word of the Lord.

14

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel. (37:1-10)

The hand of the Lord was laid on me, and he carried me away by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley, a valley full of bones. He made me walk up and down among them. There were vast quantities of these bones on the ground the whole length of the valley; and they were quite dried up. He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "You know, Lord." He said, "Prophesy over these bones. Say, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. The Lord says this to these bones: I am now going to make the breath enter you, and you will live. I shall put sinews on you, I shall make flesh grow on you, I shall cover you with skin and give you breath, and you will live; and you will learn that I am the Lord.'" I prophesied as I had been ordered. While I was prophesying, there was a noise, a sound of clattering; and the bones joined together. I looked, and saw that they were covered with sinews; flesh was growing on them and skin was covering them, but there was no breath in them. He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man. Say to the breath, 'The Lord says this: Come from the four winds, breath; breathe on these dead; let them live!'" I prophesied as he had ordered me, and the breath entered them; they came to life again and stood up on their feet, a great, an immense army.

The word of the Lord.

15

A reading from the book of Esther. (4:17)

Then Mordecai prayed to the Lord, calling to remembrance all the works of the Lord. He said:

‘O Lord, Lord, you rule as King over all things, for the universe is in your power and there is no one who can oppose you when it is your will to save Israel, for you have made heaven and earth and every wonderful thing under heaven. You are Lord of all, and there is no one who can resist you, Lord. Do not neglect your portion, which you redeemed for yourself out of the land of Egypt. Hear my prayer, and have mercy upon your inheritance; turn our mourning into feasting, that we may live and sing praise to your name, O Lord. Do not suffer the mouths of those who praise you to perish.’

The word of the Lord.

First Readings for Use in the Easter Season Only.

1.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles. (10:34-43)

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household:
'The truth I have now come to realise,' he said, 'is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him.
'It is true, God sent his word to the people of Israel, and it was to them that the good news of peace was brought by Jesus Christ - but Jesus Christ is Lord of all men. You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil. Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses. We have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead - and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.

The word of the Lord.

2.

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse (14:13)

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say to me, "Write down: happy are those who die in the Lord! Happy indeed, the Spirit says; now they can rest for ever after their work, since their good deeds go with them".
The word of the Lord

3.

A reading from the book of the Apocalypse (21: 1-7)

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the holy city, and the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, as beautiful as a bride all dressed for her husband. Then I heard a loud voice call from the throne, "You see this city? Here God lives among men. He will make his home among them; they shall be his people, and he will be their God; his name is God-with-them. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes; there will be no more death, and no more mourning or sadness. The world of the past has gone.
Then the One sitting on the throne spoke: 'Now I am making the whole of creation new,' he said. 'I will give the water from the well of life free to anybody who is thirsty; it is the rightful inheritance of the one who proves victorious; and I will be his God and he a son to me."

The word of the Lord.

4.

A reading from the book of the Apocalpse (20:11 – 21:1)

I, John, saw a great white throne and the One who was sitting on it. In his presence, earth and sky vanished, leaving no trace. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing in front of his throne, while the book of life was opened, and other books opened which were the record of what they had done in their lives, by which the dead were judged.
The sea gave up all the dead who were in it; Death and Hades were emptied of the dead who were in them; and everyone was judged according to the way in which he had lived. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the burning lake. This burning lake is the second death; and anybody whose name could not be found written in the book of life was thrown into the burning lake.
Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth had disappeared now, and there was no longer any sea.

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALMS

1.

The response is: ***The Lord* is *my Shepherd,*** Ps 22
there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my Shepherd,
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. **R/**

2. He guides me along the right path,
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness,
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff,
with these you give me comfort. **R/**

3. You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil,
my cup is overflowing. **R/**

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell,
for ever and ever. **R/**

2.

The response is: ***The Lord fills the earth with his love.*** Ps 32

1. They are happy, whose God is the Lord,
the people he has chosen as his own.
The Lord looks on those who revere him,
on those who hope in his love. **R/**

2. Our soul is waiting for the Lord.
The Lord is our help and our shield.
In him do our hearts find joy.
We trust in his holy name. **R/**

3. May your love be upon us, 0 Lord,
as we place all our hope in you. **R/**

3.

The response is: ***Out of the depths I cry to you, 0 Lord.*** Ps 129

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, 0 Lord,
Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleading. **R/**

2. If you, 0 Lord, should mark our guilt,
Lord, who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness:
for this we revere you. **R/**

3. My soul is waiting for the Lord,
I count on his word.
My soul is waiting for the Lord,
more than the watchman for daybreak. **R/**

4. Because with the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem
from all its iniquity. **R/**

4.

Psalm 114

The response is: ***I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.***

1. How gracious is the Lord, and just;
Our God has compassion.
The Lord protects the simple hearts;
I was helpless so he saved me. **R/**

2. I trusted, even when I said:
"I am sorely afflicted,"
And when I said in my alarm:
"No man can be trusted". **R/**

3. O precious in the eyes of the Lord
is the death of his faithful.
Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;
you have loosened my bonds. **R/**

5.

The response is: ***The Lord is my light and my help.***

1. The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink? **R/**

2. There is one thing I ask of the Lord, for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord,
all the days of my life,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his Temple. **R/**

3. I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness
in the land of the living.
Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.
Hope in the Lord! **R/**

SECOND READING OPTIONS
Readings from the New Testament

1.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans (5: 5-11)

Hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us. We were still helpless when at his appointed moment Christ died for sinful people. It is not easy to die even for a good person - though of course for someone really worthy, one might be prepared to die - but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. Having died to make us righteous, is it likely that he would now fail to save us from God's anger? When we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, we were still enemies; now that we have been reconciled, surely we may count on being saved by the life of his Son? Not merely because we have been reconciled but because we are filled with joyful trust in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have already gained our reconciliation.

The word of the Lord.

2.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans (5,17-21)

If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many will be made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous. When law came, it was to multiply the opportunities of falling, but however great the number of sins committed, grace was even greater; and so, just as sin reigned wherever there was death, so grace will reign to bring eternal life thanks to the righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The word of the Lord.

3.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans (6: 3-9)

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus, we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.
If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection. We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin. When a man dies, of course, he has finished with sin.
But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him; Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more.

The word of the Lord.

4.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans (8,14-23)

Everyone moved by the Spirit is a son of God. The spirit you received is not the spirit of slaves bringing fear into your lives again; it is the spirit of Sons, and it makes us cry out, "Abba, Father!" The Spirit himself and our spirit bear united witness that we are children of God. And if we are children we are heirs as well; heirs of God and coheirs with Christ, sharing his sufferings so as to share his glory.
I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is eagerly waiting for God to reveal his sons. It was not for any fault on the part of creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose, it was made so by God; but creation still retains the hope of being freed, like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children of God. From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free.

The word of the Lord.

5.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans (14,7-12)

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. We shall all have to stand before the judgement seat of God; as scripture says: By my life - it is the Lord who speaks - every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall praise God. It is to God, therefore, that each of us must give an account of himself.
The word of the Lord.

6.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans (8,31-35.37-39)

If God is for us, who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Jesus Christ? No! He not only died for us - he rose from the dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.
What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No! In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor anything that exists, nor anything still to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.
The word of the Lord.

7.

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (15,20-28)

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of all who have fallen asleep. Death came through one man and in the same way the resurrection of the dead has come through one man. Just as all die in Adam, so all will be brought to life in Christ; but all of them in their proper order; Christ as the first-fruits and then, after the coming of Christ, those who belong to him. After that will come the end, when he hands over the Kingdom to God the Father. For he must be King until he has put all his enemies under his feet and the last of the enemies to be destroyed is death, for everything is to be put under his feet.
Though when it is said that everything is subjected, this clearly cannot include the One who subjected everything to him. And when everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subject in his turn to the one who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all.
The word of the Lord.

8.

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (15,51-57)

I will tell you something that has been secret: that we are not all going to die, but we shall all be changed. This will be instantaneous, in the twinkling of an eye, when the last trumpet sounds. It will sound, and the dead will be raised, imperishable, and we shall be changed as well, because our present perishable nature must put on imperishability and this mortal nature must put on immortality.
When this perishable nature has put on imperishability, and when this mortal nature has put on immortality, then the words of Scripture will come true:
Death is swallowed up in victory. Death where is your victory? Death where is your sting? Now the sting of sin is death, and sin gets its power from the Law. So let us thank God for giving us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
The word of the Lord.

9.

A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (4,14-5,1)

We know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and bring us with you into his presence. Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.
So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen, but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.
For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.
The word of the Lord.

10.

A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (5,1.6-10)

We know that when the tent we live in on earth is folded up, there is a house built by God for us, an everlasting home not made of human hands, in the heavens.
We are always full of confidence, then, when we remember that to live in the body means to be exiled from the Lord, going as we do by faith and not by sight - we are full of confidence, I say, and actually want to be exiled from the body and make our home with the Lord. Whether we are living in the body or exiled from it, we are intent on pleasing him. For all the truth about us will be brought out in the law court of Christ, and each of us will get what he deserves for the things he did in the body, good or bad.
The word of the Lord.

11.

A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Philippians (3,20-21)

For us, our homeland is in heaven, and from heaven comes the Saviour we are waiting for, the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. He will do that by the same power with which he can subdue the whole universe.
The word of the Lord.

12.

A reading from the second letter of St. Paul to Timothy (2,8-13)

Remember the Good News that I carry: "Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, sprung from the race of David"; it is on account of this that I have my own hardships to bear, even to being chained like a criminal - but they cannot chain up God's news. So I bear it all for the sake of those who are chosen so that in the end they may have the salvation that is in Christ Jesus and the eternal glory that comes with it.
Here is a saying you can rely on:
If we have died with him, then we shall live with him.
If we hold firm, then we shall reign with him.
If we disown him, then he will disown us.
We may be unfaithful, but he is always faithful,
for he cannot disown his own self.

The word of the Lord

13.

A reading from the second letter of Saint Paul to Timothy. (4,6-8)

As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but to all who have longed for his appearing.

The word of the Lord.

14.

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians (4,13-18)

We want you to be quite certain, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, to make sure that you do not grieve about them like the other people who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again, and that it will be the same for those who have died in Jesus: God will bring them with him. We can tell you this from the Lord's own teaching, that any of us who are left alive until the Lord's coming will not have any advantage over those who have died. At the trumpet of God, the voice of the archangel will call out the command and the Lord himself will come down from heaven; those who have died in Christ will be the first to rise, and then those of us who are still alive will be taken up in the clouds, together with them, to meet the Lord in the air. So we shall stay with the Lord forever. With such thoughts as these you should comfort one another.
The word of the Lord

15.

A reading from the first letter of St. John (3,1-2)

Think of the love that the Father has lavished on us,
by letting us be called God's children;
and that is what we are.
Because the world refused to acknowledge him,
therefore it does not acknowledge us.
My dear people, we are already the children of God,
but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed;
all we know is, that when it is to be revealed
we shall be like him because we shall see him as he really is.

The word of the Lord.

16.

A reading from the first letter of St. Peter (1,3-9)

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons and daughters, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we can have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of the time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold - only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire - and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

The word of the Lord.

17.

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews (11,1-2.13-16)

Only faith can guarantee the blessings that we hope for, or prove the existence of the realities that at present remain unseen. It was for faith that our ancestors were commended.
All these died in faith, before receiving any of the things that had been promised, but they saw them in the far distance and welcomed them, recognising that they were only strangers and nomads on earth. People who use such terms about themselves make it quite plain that they are in search of their real homeland. They can hardly have meant the country they came from, since they had the opportunity to go back to it; but in fact they were longing for a better homeland, their heavenly homeland.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION OPTIONS

1.

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA,
God so loved the world that he gave his only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not die
but may have eternal life.
ALLELUIA.

2.

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA,
I came that you may have life,
and have it to the full, says the Lord.
ALLELUIA.

3.

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA,
I am the way, the truth, and the life, says the Lord,
no one can come to the Father, except through me.
ALLELUIA.

4.

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA,
Come you whom my Father has blessed, says the Lord,
take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you
since the foundation of the world.
ALLELUIA.

During the season of Lent, 'Alleluia' is omitted and replaced by ***'Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of eternal glory.'***

Samples for use in preparing the **Prayer of the Faithful**

(pick 4 to 6 prayers and discuss with the Priest)

1. We pray for the relatives and friends of N, especially his/her wife/husband N, his/her sons and daughters ….., his/her brothers and sisters ….., the members of his/her extended family, his/her neighbours and friends: - may God fill their hearts with his comfort and consolation. Lord, hear us.

2. We pray for N who has died: - may God now welcome him/her into his heavenly home of eternal happiness and peace. Lord, hear us.

3. We pray for all those whose lives are dedicated to caring for the sick and in particular we pray for the doctors, nurses, chaplain and staff of ……. Hospital/Nursing Home who cared for N during his/her illness / old age: - may God reward their goodness and kindness. Lord, hear us.

4. We pray in thanksgiving for our neighbours and friends who have been so kind to us during this time of sadness: - may God reward their kindness and bless their homes with happiness and peace. Lord, hear us.

5. As we pray that N will find eternal peace, we pray that the peace that is in heaven will touch the troubled parts of our world, our country, our parish, our homes and our hearts. Lord, hear us.

6. We pray for all who are ill at this time: - may God lay his healing hand on them and give them courage and hope. Lord, hear us.

7. We pray for young people: - may they always value goodness, kindness and friendship. May they see the beauty of the gift of human life. May they come to know God the Father's love for each and every one of them. Lord, hear us.

8. We pray for all elderly people: - may they receive love and care from their families and friends and may they have courage to give witness to faith and to the hope of eternal life. Lord, hear us.

9. We pray for all who have died, especially the relatives and friends of N who have gone before him/her: - may God unite them all in the happiness and peace of his heavenly home. Lord, hear us.

10. We pray for all the followers of Christ: that they may not seek the riches of this world but those things which make them pleasing in the sight of God. Lord hear us.

11. That ___ who was gentle, sincere, kind and peace-loving, may now come to possess the full happiness of the kingdom of God. Lord hear us.

12. That as _____bore the marks of a disciple of Christ on earth, Christ may now declare him (her) blessed before his Father in heaven. Lord hear us.

13. For those who mourn _____passing: that Christ may bless and comfort them in their sorrow. Lord hear us

14. That _____who proved himself (herself) a good and faithful servant in this life, may now hear those wonderful words from Christ, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Master.' Lord hear us.

15. We pray for all here present: that we may hunger after a life of goodness, so that even here on earth we may taste true happiness and peace of mind. Lord hear us.

16. We pray for all our departed relatives and friends, and for all who have died in the peace of Christ: that they may enjoy the fullness of eternal life. Lord hear us.

17. We pray for all Christians: that they may follow Christ with constancy and generosity. Lord hear us.

18. In baptism N received the light of Christ. Scatter the darkness now and lead him/her over the waters of death. Lord, hear us.

19. Our brother/sister N was nourished at the table of the Saviour. Welcome him/her in to the halls of the heavenly banquet. Lord, hear us.

20. Those who trusted in the Lord now sleep in the Lord. Give refreshment, rest and peace to all whose faith is known to you alone. Lord, hear us.

21. We pray for all those who cared for N in the hospital / nursing home / during his/her illness, that the Lord may reward them and help them to persevere in their work. Lord, hear us.

22. The family and friends of N seek comfort and consolation. Heal their pain and dispel the darkness and doubt that come from grief. Lord, hear us.

Post-Communion Reflection Option

1

When I come to the end of the road, and the sun has set for me,
I want no tears in a gloom-filled room. Why cry for a soul set free?

Miss me a little, but not too much, and not with your head bowed low.
Remember the love that once we shared. Miss me but let me go.

This is a journey we all must take, And each must take alone;
It's all a part of God's perfect plan, A step on the road to home.

When you are lonely and sick of heart. Go to the friends that we know.
Bury your sorrows in doing good, Miss me, but let me go.

2

We give them back to you O Lord, who first gave them to us; and as you did not lose them in the giving, so we do not lose them in the return.

Not as the world gives do you give, O lover of souls.
For what is yours is also ours if we belong to you.

Life is unending because love is undying, and the boundaries of this life are but an horizon, and an horizon is but the limit of our vision.

Lift us up, strong Son of God, that we may see further.
Strengthen our faith that we may see beyond the horizon.

And while you prepare a place for us, as you have promised, prepare us also for that happy place; that where you are we may be also, and with those whom we have loved, forever.

3

In Mary's keeping I placed you yesterday;
I place you today in the keeping of her Son.
May Peter open heaven to you willingly,
May Michael not call you to his left hand side,
May God and Mary come to claim you
And carry your soul to the city of saints.

4

The Two Roads

Christ spoke about two roads.
The first is broad and easy to travel.
All you have to do is follow the crowd.
It is the way of comfort and ease, popularity and fame,
and is lit by glittering neon lights.
Many are fooled and travel down this road,
but in the end it leads nowhere; they die in the desert.
The second road is narrow and difficult. You will often have to go it alone.
It is the way of sacrifice and struggle.
At times you will have no light to guide you save that of the stars.
Few take this road.
But they are the lucky ones,
for this road leads to the Promised Land.

5

Footprints in the Sand

One night a man had a dream.
He dreamt that he was walking along a beach with the Lord.
Across the sky flashed the scenes of his life. For each scene he noticed not one but two sets of footprints in the sand.
He understood immediately that one belonged to him, and the other to the Lord.
But then he noticed a curious thing.
At the lowest and saddest times in his life there was only one set of footprints.
This bothered him, so he asked the Lord:
'How come that during the most difficult times in my life, the very times when I most needed you, you left me on my own?'
Then the Lord replied:
'My friend, during your trials and sufferings, when you see only one set of footprints, those footprints are mine.
It was then that I carried you.'

6

Trust in God

Lord,
I have no idea where I'm going.
I do not see the road ahead of me.
I cannot know for certain where it will end.
Nor do I really know myself.
And the fact that I think I am doing your will,
does not mean that I am actually doing it.
But I believe that the desire to please you, ,
does in fact please you,
and I hope that I have this desire.
I know that if I do this,
you will lead me by the right road,
I though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore I trust you always. .
Though I may seem to be lost
and in the shadow of death,
I will not fear, for you are with me,
and you will never leave me face my perils alone.

7

When I leave

My last breath does not say goodbye, for my love for you is truly timeless.
I leave my thoughts, my laughter, my dreams to you whom I have treasured. I give you what no thief can steal - the memories of our times together, the tender, love-filled moments, the successes that we have shared, the hard times that brought us closer together and the roads we have walked side by side.
I also leave you a solemn promise that after I am home in the presence of God, I will still be present in the communion of Saints, whenever and wherever you call on me.
My spirit will be drawn to you by the magnet of our love.
Whenever you are in need, call me; I will come to you, with my arms full of wisdom and light to open up your blocked paths, to untangle your knots and to be your avenue to God.
All I take with me as I leave is your love and the millions of memories of all that we have shared.
So fear not nor grieve at my departure, you whom I love so much, for my roots and yours are forever intertwined.

8

God's Garden

God looked around his garden
and found an empty place,
He then looked down upon the earth
and saw your tired face.
He put his arms around you
and lifted you to rest.
God's garden must be beautiful
He always takes the best.
He knew that you were suffering
He knew you were in pain.
He knew that you would never
get well on earth again.
He saw the road was getting rough
and the hills were hard to climb.
So he closed your weary eyelids
and whispered, 'Peace be Thine'.
It broke our hearts to lose you
But you didn't go alone,
for part of us went with you
the day God called you home.



"Do not let your hearts be troubled.
Trust in God still, and trust in me.
There are many rooms in my Father's house,
if there were not I should have told you.
I am going now to prepare a place for you,
and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I
shall return to take you with me,
so that where I am you may be too"

John 14:1-3

Loughgilly
Parish