

Christian Funerals

What is the relationship between the sacraments and the death of a Christian?

The Christian who dies in Christ reaches at the end of his earthly existence the fulfilment of that new life which was begun in Baptism, strengthened in Confirmation, and nourished in the Eucharist, the foretaste of the heavenly banquet. The meaning of the death of a Christian becomes clear in the light of the death and Resurrection of Christ our only hope. The Christian who dies in Christ Jesus goes “away from the body to be at home with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8)

What do funeral rites express?

Although celebrated in different rites in keeping with the situations and traditions of various regions, funerals express the paschal character of Christian death in hope of the resurrection. They also manifest the meaning of communion with the departed particularly through prayer for the purification of their souls.

What are the main moments in funerals?

Usually, funeral rites consist of four principal parts: welcoming the body of the deceased by the community with words of comfort and hope, the Liturgy of the Word, the Eucharistic Sacrifice, and the farewell in which the soul of the departed is entrusted to God, the Source of eternal life, while the body is buried in the hope of the resurrection.

How is the Christian moral life bound up with faith and the sacraments?

What the symbol of faith professes, the sacraments communicate. Indeed, through them the faithful receive the grace of Christ and the gifts of the Holy Spirit which give them the capacity of living a new life as children of God in Christ whom they have received in faith.

O Christian, recognise your dignity.
...NITY OF
PERSON – MAN THE



St Leo the Great

THE HUMAN
IMAGE OF GOD

What is the root of human

dignity?

The dignity of the human person is rooted in his or her creation in the image and likeness of God. Endowed with a spiritual and immortal soul, intelligence and free will, the human person is ordered to God and called in soul and in body to eternal beatitude (happiness).

How do we attain beatitude?

We attain beatitude by virtue of the grace of Christ which makes us participants in the divine life. Christ in the Gospel points out to his followers the way that leads to eternal happiness: the beatitudes. The grace of Christ also is operative in every person who, following a correct conscience, seeks and loves the true and the good and avoids evil.

Why are the beatitudes important for us?

The beatitudes are at the heart of Jesus' preaching and they take up and fulfil the promises that God made starting with Abraham. They depict the very countenance of Jesus and they characterise authentic Christian life. They reveal the ultimate goal of human activity, which is eternal happiness.

What is the relationship between the beatitudes and our desire for happiness?

The beatitudes respond to the innate desire for happiness that God has placed in the human heart in order to draw us to himself. God alone can satisfy this desire.

What is eternal happiness?

It is the vision of God in eternal life in which we are fully "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), of the glory of Christ and of the joy of the Trinitarian life. This happiness surpasses human capabilities. It is a supernatural and gratuitous gift of God just as is the grace which leads to it. This promised happiness confronts us with decisive moral choices concerning earthly goods and urges us to love God above all things.



El Greco – St John Contemplates the Immaculate Conception.

It is essential that every Catholic has access to good Catechesis to be able to deepen their faith. The Diocese of Plymouth recommends the many Catechetical Workshops from 'Franciscan at Home,' for more information on access to these and online or real group sessions contact deborah.vankroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk