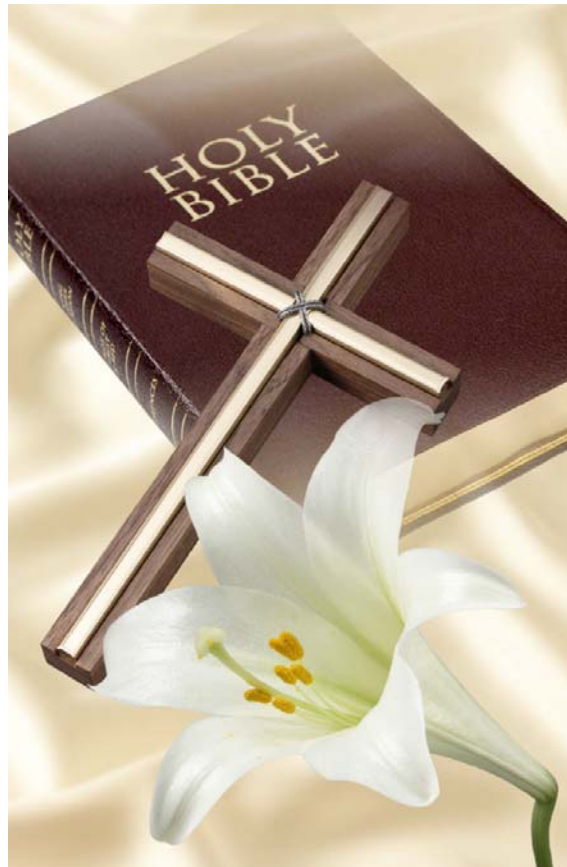


*Funeral Liturgy Planning*



*St. Thomas of Villanova  
Wilmington, Ma.*

Most Merciful God,  
Whose wisdom is beyond our understanding,  
Surround your people with your love  
That they may not be overwhelmed by these losses  
But have confidence in your goodness,  
And strength to meet the days to come.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen

No matter how long or short the illness; no matter how young or old our loved one, death always startles us. No matter how it has been anticipated, death always surprises us. And so we journey together, trying to acknowledge the death which still seems unreal, and trying to comfort each other with the faith which is ours in Christ. We believe that through baptism we have died with Him and that through Him we shall know the fullness of life for all eternity.

The Order of Christian Funerals as observed by the Catholic Church – from the vigil service at the wake, to the celebration of the Funeral Mass, and the final commendation and burial – is a journey of faith. In this ritual, we give our beloved dead to the Lord and support and console each other through our faith. We encourage you, as you walk this journey, to participate in the Funeral Liturgy as fully as you can. The simple but profound ways in which you are encouraged to do so are mentioned below.

**Sprinkling Rite:**

Sprinkling of the casket with water, by the celebrant, symbolizes that the deceased was baptized into the death and resurrection of Christ

**Placing of the Pall:**

The funeral pall is a white cover draped over the casket at the beginning of the funeral Mass. This pall is a reminder of the white garment given to us at our baptism. It symbolizes our new life in Christ.

Members of the family or friends of the deceased are encouraged to place the pall on the casket. If not done by family or friends, it may be done by the designated pall bearers.

### **Scripture Readings:**

The word of God brings hope and consolation. You may choose scripture readings for the Funeral Mass from the Old and New Testaments which speak to your faith and the faith of your loved one. Those who proclaim God's word need to be aware of its meaning and the manner in which it should be proclaimed. Family members or friends are encouraged to proclaim the word of God during the Funeral Mass. (See page 6 below for recommended readings.)

### **Presentation of the Gifts:**

The church encourages members of the family or friends to bring to the altar the gifts of bread and wine for the celebration of the Eucharist. Up to four family members or friends may bring forward the gifts.

### **Music:**

The funeral liturgy in the Catholic Church is a time for the family and friends of the deceased to gather with the larger church community for prayer and support. Music has a unique ability to touch our heart, to heal our pain, to express our sorrow and to lift up our soul. On page 19 of this booklet we offer some ideas for hymns and psalms which may be chosen for use during the Funeral Mass at St. Thomas of Villanova Church. This is by no means a complete list, however, be aware that the music chosen for the celebration must rightfully and prayerfully bid farewell to your beloved family member and thus be chosen with this in mind.

## **Words of Remembrance:**

At St. Thomas of Villanova Parish, we realize the importance for families to express words of remembrance. The healing process begins as we recall the events of the person's life. These words of remembrance help to bring closure and comfort to all those gathered. Each family has the opportunity to offer words of remembrance about their loved one. The following instructions may assist those who wish to present words of remembrance.

- ∞ Only **one** member of the family is to be selected for this honor.
- ∞ The remembrance should be no longer than **five (5) minutes** in length.
- ∞ The remembrance must be written. Many times during moments of sorrow, we find it difficult to collect our thoughts. A prepared text allows one to be clear and articulate.
- ∞ The prepared words must be shared with the priest beforehand.
- ∞ The words of remembrance will take place after Communion.
- ∞ If several people wish to speak, then they may do so at the Funeral Home during the wake service.

## *Old Testament Readings*

(NOTE: During the Easter Season, readings # 1, 7, 18, or 19 from the New Testament selections starting on pg. 10 are used as the First Reading instead of a passage from the Old Testament.)

1. A reading from the Book of Job  
(Job 19:1, 23-27)

Then Job answered and said: Oh, would that my words were written down! Would that they were inscribed in a record: that with an iron chisel and with lead they were cut in the rock forever! But as for me I know my Vindicator lives, and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust; whom I myself shall see: my own eyes, not another's shall behold him, and from my flesh I shall see God; my inmost being is consumed with longing.

The Word of the Lord

2. A reading from the book of Wisdom  
(Longer version: Wisdom 3:1-9)

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are at peace. For if before men, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality; Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself. In the time of their visitation they shall shine, and shall dart about as sparks through stubble; they shall judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord shall be their King forever. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with his elect.

The Word of the Lord

(Shorter version: Wisdom 3: 1-6, 9)

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction. But they are at peace. For if before men, indeed, they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality; Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself. Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love: Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with his elect.

The Word of the Lord

3. A reading from the book of Wisdom  
(Wisdom 4: 7-14)

The just man, though he die early, shall be at rest. For the age that is honorable comes not with the passing of time, nor can it be measured in terms of years. Rather, understanding is the horary crown for men, and an unsullied life, the attainment of old age. He who pleased God was loved; he who lived among sinners was transported – snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind or deceit beguile his soul; for the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right and the whirl of desire transforms the innocent mind. Having become perfect in a short while, he reached the fullness of a long career; for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he sped him out of the midst of wickedness. But the people saw and did not understand, nor did they take this into account.

The Word of the Lord

4 A reading from the prophet Isaiah  
(Isaiah 25: 6, 7-9)

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples. On this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples, the web that is woven over all nations; he will destroy death forever. The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces; the reproach of his people he will remove from the whole earth; for the Lord has spoken. On that day it will be said: "Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us! This is the Lord for whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!"

The Word of the Lord

5. A reading from the Book of Lamentations  
(Lamentations 3: 17-26)

My soul is deprived of peace, I have forgotten what happiness is; I tell myself my future is lost, all that I hoped for from the Lord. The thought of my homeless poverty is wormwood and gall; remembering it over and over leaves my soul downcast within me. But I will call this to mind, as my reason to have hope: the favors of the Lord are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent; they are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness. My portion is the Lord, says my soul; therefore will I hope in him. Good is the Lord to one who waits for him, to the soul that seeks him; it is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord

6. A reading from the book of the prophet Daniel  
(Daniel 12: 1-3)

[I, Daniel, mourned and I heard this word of the Lord:] “At that time there shall arise Michael, the great prince, guardian of your people; it shall be a time unsurpassed in distress since nations began until that time. At that time your people shall escape, everyone who is found written in the book. Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some shall live forever, others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace. But the wise shall shine brightly like the splendor of the firmament, and those who lead the many to justice shall be like the stars forever.

The Word of the Lord

7. A reading from the second book of Maccabees  
(2 Maccabees 12: 43-46)

Judas [the ruler of Israel] then took up a collection among all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice. In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view; for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death. But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was holy and pious thought. Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin.

The Word of the Lord

## *New Testament Readings*

1. A reading from the Acts of the Apostles  
(Longer version: Acts 10: 4-43)

Peter proceeded to speak and said, “In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him. You know the word (that) he sent to the Israelites as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and (in) Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree. This man God raised (on) the third day and granted that he be visible, not to all the people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

The Word of the Lord

(Shorter version: Acts 10: 34-36, 42-43)

Peter proceeded to speak and said, “In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him. You know the word (that) he sent to the Israelites as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, he commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

The Word of the Lord

2. A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans  
(Romans 5: 1-11)

Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. For Christ, while we were still helpless, yet died at the appointed time for the ungodly. Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. How much more then, since we are now justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath. Indeed, if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his son, how much more, once reconciled, will we be saved by his life. Not only that, but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The Word of the Lord

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

For if by the transgression of one person, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come to reign in life through the one person Jesus Christ. In conclusion, just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so through one righteous act acquittal and life came to all. For just as through the disobedience of one person the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one the many will be made righteous. The law entered in so that transgression might increase but, where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through justification for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord

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

Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in the newness of life. For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection. We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin. For a dead person has been absolved from sin. If then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

The Word of the Lord

(Shorter form: Romans 6: 3-4, 8-9)

Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

The Word of the Lord

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

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry “Abba, Father!” The spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

The Word of the Lord

6. A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans  
(Romans 8: 31- 35. 37- 39)

What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him? Who will bring a charge against God’s chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ (Jesus) who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angles, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord

7. A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans  
(Romans 14: 7-9. 10-12)

None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written: "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So (then) each of us shall give an account of himself (to God).

The Word of the Lord

8. A reading from the 1<sup>st</sup> letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians  
(1 Corinthians 15: 20-24, 25-28)

But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead came also through a human being. For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the first fruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to his God and Father, when he has destroyed every sovereignty and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death, for "he subjected everything under his feet." But when it says that everything has been subjected, it is clear that it excludes the one who subjected everything to him. When everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will (also) be subjected to the one who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.

The Word of the Lord

9. A reading from the 1<sup>st</sup> letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians  
(1 Corinthians 15: 51-57)

Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not fall asleep, but we will all be changed, in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For that which is corruptible must clothe itself with incorruptibility, and that which is mortal must clothe itself with immortality. And when this which is corruptible clothes itself with incorruptibility and this which is mortal clothes itself with immortality, then the word that is written shall come about: "Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death is your victory? Where O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord

10. A reading from the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians  
(2 Corinthians 5: 1. 6-10)

For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven. So we are always courageous, although we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yet we are courageous, and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord. Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

The Word of the Lord

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

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.

The Word of the Lord

12. A reading from the 1<sup>st</sup> letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians  
(1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18)

We do not want to be unaware, brothers, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep. Indeed, we tell you this, on the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will surely not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself, with a word of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, console one another with these words.

The Word of the Lord

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

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David: such is my gospel, for which I am suffering, even to the point of chains, like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained. Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory.

This saying is trustworthy:

If we have died with him

We shall also live with him;

If we persevere

We shall also reign with him.

But if we deny him he will deny us. If we are unfaithful he remains Faithful, for he cannot deny himself.

The Word of the Lord

14. A reading from the first letter of John  
(1 John 3: 1-2)

See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

The Word of the Lord

15. A reading from the first letter of John  
(1 John 3: 14-16)

We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers. Whoever does not love remains in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him. The way we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

The Word of the Lord

16. A reading from the book of Revelation  
(Revelation 14:13)

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," said the Spirit, "let them find rest from their labors, for their works accompany them."

The Word of the Lord

17. A reading from the book of Revelation  
(Revelation 20: 11-21:1)

I, John, saw a large white throne and the one who was sitting on it. The earth and the sky fled from his presence and there was no place for them. I saw the dead, the great and the lowly, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. Then another scroll was opened, the book of life. The dead were judged according to their deeds, by what was written in the scrolls. The sea gave up its dead; then Death and Hades gave up their dead. All the dead were judged according to their deeds. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the pool of fire. (This pool of fire is the second death.) Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the pool of fire. Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, a New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

The Word of the Lord

18. A reading from the book of Revelation  
(Revelation 21: 1-5, 6-7)

I, John saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. I also saw the holy city, a New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them (as their God). He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, (for) the old order has passed away." The one who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give a gift from the spring of life-giving water. The victor will inherit these gifts, and I shall be his God, and he will be my son."

The Word of the Lord

## Musical Suggestions

### Processional and Recessional Hymns:

Here I am Lord  
Be not afraid  
Amazing Grace  
How Great Thou Art  
Let there be peace on earth  
On Eagles Wings (can also be a Psalm)

### Psalms:

Yahweh I know you are near  
The Lord is my Shepherd (Respond and acclaim)  
Shepherd me oh God  
You are my Shepherd

### Offertory/ Communion:

You are mine  
Ave Maria- Schubert  
Hail Mary Gentle Woman  
I am the bread of life  
All I ask of you  
What wondrous love is this  
We have been told  
Prayer of St. Francis  
Turn to me  
Taste and see (Moore)  
Peace is flowing like a river

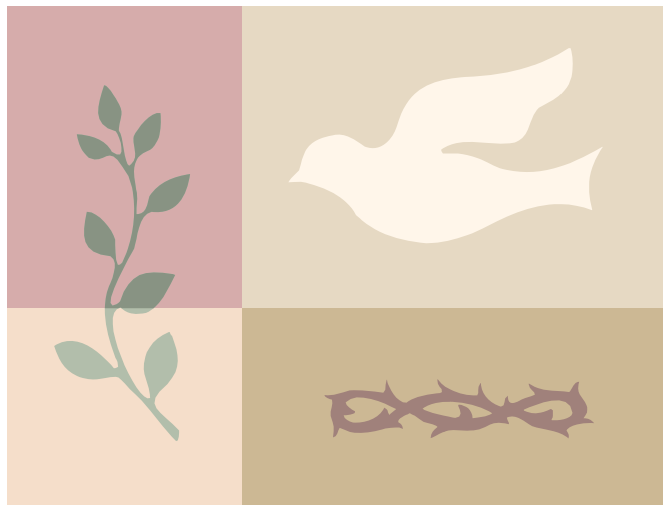
## **St. Thomas of Villanova**

126 Middlesex Ave.  
Wilmington, Ma. 01887

If we can be of further assistance during this time of loss, please do not hesitate to contact us at (978) 658-4665

Fr. Phillip B. Earley  
Fr. Paul G. Flammia  
Deacon Clifford D. King

May God bless each of you in this time of Grief



# St Thomas of Villanova Funeral Liturgy Planning Sheet

**Song for the Procession:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Old Testament Reading: (pp. 6-9) #**\_\_\_\_

**Reader's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Responsorial Psalm:** \_\_\_\_\_

**New Testament Reading: (pp. 11-18) #**\_\_\_\_

**Reader's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Song for preparation of the Gifts:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Names of Gift Bearers:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Song for Communion:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Words of Remembrance  
Given by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Song for the Recessional:** \_\_\_\_\_