



**LITURGICAL GUIDANCE
WITH THE DEATH OF POPE EMERITUS BENEDICT XVI**

**OFFICE FOR DIVINE WORSHIP
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2022**

Today, with the announcement of the death of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, the clergy and faithful throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia are encouraged to pray in an intentional way for the happy repose of his soul. What follows is liturgical guidance for parishes, institutions, religious communities and educational settings to observe the death of the Pope Emeritus in the days leading up to his Funeral on January 5, 2023 and the immediate days following.

- Clergy and faithful, especially through social and print communications, are asked to pray the customary *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, and *Glory be to the Father* along with the prayer, *Eternal rest*, for the repose of the soul of the Pope Emeritus during this period. School children are especially invited to follow this practice. Additionally the Holy Rosary offered for this same intention is recommended. A portrait of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI may be displayed in churches, chapels, and institutions during this period. The use of black bunting on church entrances is not expected to be in place.
- The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the happy repose of the soul of the Pope Emeritus should be planned at some point leading up to the Funeral or during the days following, keeping in mind the norms of the liturgical calendar, allowing for the attendance of as many of the faithful as possible. Several parishes and institutions can join together for the celebration of Holy Mass for this intention.
- The Committee on Divine Worship of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops published the following additional information (December 30, 2022):
- *Note that the first section of “Various Prayers for the Dead” in the Roman Missal includes three Mass formularies for a Pope (forms A, B, and C). As with all Masses for the Dead, the prayers of the various formularies are interchangeable. The celebrant may or may not wish to insert the word “Emeritus” when naming Benedict XVI.*

- *Recall the instruction of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal:*
 - *381. A Mass for the Dead, on receiving the news of a death, for the final burial, or the first anniversary, may be celebrated even on days within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord, on days when an Obligatory Memorial occurs, and on weekdays other than Ash Wednesday or the weekdays of Holy Week.*
 - *Other Masses for the Dead or “daily” Masses, may be celebrated on weekdays in Ordinary Time on which Optional Memorials occur or when the Office is of the weekday, provided such Masses are actually applied for the dead.*
- *In the United States, the vestment colors violet, white, or black may be used in Masses and Offices for the Dead (see GIRM, no. 346e). However, it is customary for red vestments to be worn at a Mass for the Dead offered for a Pope since we are mourning the death of the successor of the Apostle Peter.*
- *Naturally, special petitions can be offered in the Universal Prayer at Masses celebrated for the repose of the Pope Emeritus. The following are provided as examples:*
 - *That Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI, called to the heavenly kingdom by the Lord, may rejoice forever at the banquet table of heaven, we pray to the Lord.*
 - *That Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI, who served the Church as Supreme Pontiff for eight years, may worship God for ever in the liturgy of heaven, we pray to the Lord.*
 - *That the tireless efforts of Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI, now called to the Lord, may bear fruit in unity, peace and love among all men and women, we pray to the Lord.*
 - *For Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI, who preached that God is love and that we are saved in hope, that he may know God’s love forever in heaven, we pray to the Lord.*
- *In the Eucharistic Prayer, any of the Prefaces for the Dead (I-V) may be used. The formula for mentioning the name of the current Pope in the Eucharistic Prayer is to be followed as usual (i.e., “Francis our Pope and N. our Bishop”). The naming of the deceased Pope Emeritus is best done during the intercession for the dead, as provided in Eucharistic Prayers I-III: “your servant Benedict, our Pope (Emeritus).”*
- *Communities and individuals can pray the Office of the Dead in the Liturgy of the Hours for the intention of the Holy Father. In a public celebration of Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer, a bishop, priest, or deacon could give a brief homily following the reading. A reflection on the life of the former Pope might best be given after the concluding prayer and before the dismissal.*

Thank you and God bless,
 Father Dennis Gill
 Director, Office for Divine Worship