

**ORDER OF SERVICE FOR VISITING A CEMETERY  
LAY PERSON PRESIDING**

**GREETING** \_\_\_\_\_

When all have gathered around the grave, the leader greets those present with the following words:

Praise be to God our Father, who raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

Blessed be God forever.

All respond: Blessed be God forever.

The leader then introduces the prayer in these or similar words:

We gather today to pray for N. whose bodies lie here in rest. They have passed from death to life in the company of Jesus, who died and rose to new life. We pray that God may welcome them among all the saints of heaven.

**THE WORD OF GOD** \_\_\_\_\_

One or more of the following Scripture Readings are read by the leader or another person. Other readings from the Bible may be read if desired, and a Psalm may be said/sung after the reading.

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. ~ 2 Corinthians 5:1

I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, no any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. ~ Romans 8:38-39

**SILENCE** \_\_\_\_\_

There may be a short period of silence to allow for private prayer.

## LITANY

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The following litany is said. If holy water is available, the leader may sprinkle the grave with holy water.

- Leader: Lord, have mercy. All: Lord, have mercy.  
Leader: Christ, have mercy. All: Christ, have mercy.  
Leader: Lord, have mercy. All: Lord, have mercy.
- Leader: Holy Mary, Mother of God All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Michael All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. John the Baptist All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Joseph All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Peter All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Paul All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Andrew All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Stephen All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Ann All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Teresa All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Catherine All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Frances Cabrini All: Pray for them.  
Leader: St. Elizabeth Seton All: Pray for them.  
*Other saints may be added...*  
Leader: All holy men and women All: Pray for them.
- Leader: Christ, pardon all their faults. All: Lord, hear our prayer.  
Leader: Christ, remember the good they have done. All: Lord, hear our prayer.  
Leader: Christ, receive them into eternal life. All: Lord, hear our prayer.  
Leader: Christ, comfort all those who mourn. All: Lord, hear our prayer.
- Leader: Lord, have mercy. All: Lord, have mercy.  
Leader: Christ, have mercy. All: Christ, have mercy.  
Leader: Lord, have mercy. All: Lord, have mercy.

## LORD'S PRAYER

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Leader: With Christ there is mercy and fullness of redemption; let us pray as Jesus taught us.

All: **Our Father...**

## PRAYER

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**Leader:**

Lord God,  
whose days are without end  
and whose mercies beyond counting,  
keep us mindful that life is short and the hour of death unknown.  
Let your Spirit guide our days on earth  
in the ways of holiness and justice,  
that we may serve you  
in union with the whole Church,  
sure in faith, strong in hope, perfected in love.  
And when our earthly journey is ended,  
lead us rejoices into your Kingdom,  
where you live forever and ever.

**All:** Amen

## CONCLUDING RITE

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**Leader:** Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord

**All:** And let perpetual light shine upon them.

**Leader:** May (he/she/they) rest in peace.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** May (his/her/their) soul(s) and the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

**All:** Amen.

**Leader:** May the peace of God, which is beyond all understanding, keep our hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

**All:** Amen.

Sources:

*Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers Revised Edition*. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. 2008.

*Book of Blessings*. Chapter 57: Order for Visiting a Cemetery. Published by authority of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, National Conference of Catholic Bishops. Liturgical Press, 1989.