

The RITE OF COMMITTAL © Order of Christian Funerals

218. *When the funeral procession arrives at the place of committal the minister says the following or a similar invitation.*

Invitation:

Our brother/sister **N.** has gone to his/her rest in the peace of Christ. May the Lord now welcome him/her to the table of God's children in heaven. With faith and hope in eternal life, let us assist him/her with our prayers.

SCRIPTURE VERSE

219. *One of the following or another brief Scripture verse is read. The minister first says:*

We read in sacred Scripture:

A Matthew 25:34 Come, you who are blessed by my Father, says the Lord inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world

B John 6:39 This is the will of my Father, says the Lord, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given to me and that I should raise it up on the last day.

C Philippians 3:20 Our true home is in heaven, and Jesus Christ whose return we long for will come from heaven to save us.

D Revelation 1:5-6 Jesus Christ is the firstborn of the dead; to him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE PLACE OF COMMITTAL

220. *The minister says one of the following prayers.*

A If the place of committal is to be blessed

O God, by whose mercy the faithful departed find rest, bless this grave, and send your holy angel to watch over it. As we bury here the body of our brother/sister, deliver his/her soul from every bond of sin, that he/she may rejoice in you with your saints for ever. We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

Or B:

Lord Jesus Christ,
by your own three days in the tomb,
you hallowed the graves of all who believe in you
and so made the grave a sign of hope
that promises resurrection
even as it claims our mortal bodies.
Grant that our brother/sister may sleep here in peace
until you awaken him/her to glory,
for you are the resurrection and the life.
Then he/she will see you face to face
and in your light will see light
and know the splendour of God,
for you live and reign for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

B If the place of committal has already been blessed

All praise to you, Lord of all creation.
Praise to you, holy and living God.
We praise and bless you for your mercy,
we praise and bless you for your kindness.
Blessed is the Lord, our God [or *Blessed be God forever*]

R. Blessed is the Lord, our God.

You sanctify the homes of the living
and make holy the places of the dead.
You alone open the gates of righteousness
and lead us to the dwellings of the saints.
Blessed is the Lord, our God.

R. Blessed is the Lord, our God.

We praise you, our refuge and strength.
We bless you, our God and Redeemer.
Your praise is always in our hearts and on our lips.
We remember the mighty deeds of the covenant.
Blessed is the Lord, our God

R. Blessed is the Lord, our God.

Almighty and ever-living God, remember the mercy with which you graced your servant N. in life. Receive him/her, we pray, into the mansions of the saints. As we make ready our brother's/sister's resting place, look also with favour on those who mourn and comfort them in their loss. Grant this through Christ our Lord. **R. Amen.**

C When the final disposition of the body is to take place at a later time [e.g. cremation]

Almighty and ever-living God, in you we place our trust and hope, in you the dead whose bodies were temples of the Spirit find everlasting peace.

As we take leave of our brother/sister, give our hearts peace in the firm hope that one day N. will live in the mansion you have prepared for him/her in heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **R. Amen.**

COMMITTAL

221. The minister may, in accordance with local custom, sprinkle the grave and the coffin with holy water. The minister then says the words of committal.

A Because God has chosen to call our brother/sister N. from this life to himself, we commit his/her body to the earth

[*or the deep or the elements or its resting place*], for we are dust and unto dust we shall return.

[Where it is the custom some earth may be scattered on the coffin]

But the Lord Jesus Christ will change our mortal bodies to be like his in glory, for he is risen, the firstborn from the dead. So let us commend our brother/sister to the Lord, that the Lord may embrace him/her in peace and raise up his/her body on the last day.

B In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ,
we commend to Almighty God our brother/sister N.,
and we commit his/her body to the ground

[*or the deep or the elements or its resting place*],
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

[Where it is the custom some earth may be scattered on the coffin]

The Lord bless him/her and keep him/her,
the Lord make his face to shine upon him/her
and be gracious to him/her,
the Lord lift up his countenance upon him/her
and give him/her peace.

C For ashes

My friends,

as we prepare to bury [entomb] the ashes of our brother/sister,
we recall that our bodies bear the imprint of the first creation
when they were fashioned from dust;
but in faith we remember, too, that by the new creation
we also bear the image of Jesus who was raised to glory.
In confident hope that one day God will raise us
and transform our mortal bodies,
let us pray:

Pause for silent prayer

Faithful God, Lord of all creation,
you desire that nothing redeemed by your Son
will ever be lost,
and that the just will be raised up on the last day.
Comfort us today with the word of your promise
as we return the ashes of our brother/sister to the earth.
Grant N. a place of rest and peace
where the world of dust and ashes has no dominion.
Confirm us in our hope that he/she will be created anew
on the day when you will raise him/her up in glory
to live with you and all the saints
for ever and ever. R. **Amen.**

INTERCESSIONS

222. *The minister begins:*

Dear friends, in reverence let us pray to God,
the source of all mercies:

Lord, you consoled Martha and Mary in their distress; draw near to
us who mourn for N., and dry the tears of those who weep.

We pray to the Lord: **R. Lord, have mercy.**

You wept at the grave of Lazarus, your friend;
comfort us in our sorrow.

We pray to the Lord: **R. Lord, have mercy.**

You raised the dead to life; give to our brother/sister eternal life.

We pray to the Lord: **R. Lord, have mercy.**

Comfort us in our sorrow at the death of N.;
let our faith be our consolation, and eternal life our hope.

We pray to the Lord: **R. Lord, have mercy.**

We pray for all who are buried in this cemetery: [*especially...*]
may their suffering be lessened, may their joy be increased
may the light of God's glory shine on them
and may they rest in peace.

We pray to the Lord: **R. Lord, have mercy.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

221. *In the following or similar words, the minister invites those present to pray the Lord's Prayer.*

With longing for the coming of God's kingdom, let us pray:

All say: **Our Father, who art in heaven...**

CONCLUDING PRAYER

A God of holiness and power,
accept our prayers on behalf of your servant N.;
do not count his/her deeds against him/her,
for in his/her heart he/she desired to do your will.

As his/her faith united him/her to your people on earth,
so may your mercy join him/her to the angels in heaven.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **R. Amen.**

B Loving God, from whom all life proceeds
and by whose hand the dead are raised again,
though we are sinners, you wish always to hear us.
Accept the prayers we offer in sadness for your servant N.:
deliver his/her soul from death, number him/her among your saints
and clothe him/her with the robe of salvation
to enjoy for ever the delights of your kingdom.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **R. Amen.**

PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE

225. The assisting minister says:

Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.

All pray silently. The minister, with hands outstretched, prays over the people, :

Merciful Lord, you know the anguish of the sorrowful,
you are attentive to the prayers of the humble.
Hear your people who cry out to you in their need,
and strengthen their hope in your lasting goodness.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. **R. Amen.**

*Where it is the custom a hymn to Our Lady
or a decade of the Rosary may now follow.*

The minister then says the following:

Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord.

R. And let perpetual light shine upon him/her.

May he/she rest in peace. **R. Amen.**

May his/her soul and the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **R. Amen.**

*A lay minister invokes God's blessing and signs himself
or herself with the sign of the cross, saying:*

May the love of God and the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ
bless and console us and gently wipe every tear from our eyes:
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

The minister then concludes

Go in the peace of Christ.

R. Thanks be to God.