

FEEDBACK & FAQ FROM “REMEMBERING IN A COVID CLIMATE” WEBINARS

How many people can minister at a parish online Remembrance Service?

Any liturgy is never a solo project for the priest. For an event as important as your parish Remembrance Service or Mass you will need the essential assistance of a Minister of the Word, a Cantor (perhaps two?), an Instrumentalist, a Sacristan/Server, Powerpoint operator if required. And key to any successful Parish Remembrance Service will be the contribution of some members of the Parish Funeral Ministry Team to help with actions.

Keep the overall number below an absolute maximum of 10. Try to include young people in this number. At all times, these ministers will need to keep the required physical distance from one another in the sanctuary area, or in the body of the church. Some, even most of them will not need to be visible online most of the time. Always wear face coverings when not speaking. Where possible, use separate microphones when speaking or singing.

Music: *I think that live music would be good. We have so much lovely music in our churches which we don't get to hear at the moment.*

I believe live music itself is a powerful form of prayer even if it is just a soloist leading

Live music yes within Covid guidelines. But even recorded music would bring more life to our prayer

Live music is always preferable. Remember that there may well be copyright issues when playing recorded music or 'You Tube' videos during a service which is broadcast online. Live music is much less problematic in this regard.

Candles for each of the deceased: *We thought about using the images of the lighted candles with the name of each person who died in the last year on them, this we have done every year, but this year they need to be centred and well seen on the camera.*

We could invite people to light a candle at home

We are inviting all those in the parish taking part on November 2 to light a candle and place it in their window (safely)

You can get the candles that work on a battery and they look very realistic candles send a beautiful message of ongoing light

Parishioners often want a single candle for each person remembered

The Word: *Most Churches have live streaming so we could set up times when we could simply read the Word.*

Reading with different voices can be very effective and helpful when proclaiming the word on webcam

Different voices is a great idea - in the absence of other sensory cues this is important

Images on screens to accompany the prayer:

I'm not a great lover of screen images in the church

Images are important as not everything is heard very clearly on webcam

Webcams: *The problem with webcam is that it is a distant view. We could supplement it with a live video on Facebook live fed into the webcam feed.*

We are going to ask families to supply photos (of the deceased) and we will create a Powerpoint slide show to coincide with each name being read out...

I think photos are a great idea with the families permission of course

Some of your elderly folk who have died may not have any family contacts with photos though

I would like to add more of a youth feeling within our parish webcam

It depends on what type of web camera you have. If you can zoom on it then visual possibilities are better. If it is static on one wide shot then parish is more restricted in possibilities.

The pace of images and voices needs to be well practiced.....

Many people will want to remember those who are deceased who might not be on any parish list but have died in hospital or a nursing home with Covid

I agree that photos on powerpoint is a good idea, use autumn leaves to dress the steps in front of the altar.

I like the idea of register left on a podium along with different voices being used to read out the names of the deceased. The paschal candle placed nearer the altar perhaps?

Very important to have a calm uncluttered space in sanctuary.

The people using the resources are as important as the resources, its good to have a team approach

How are people at home going to participate beyond looking at a computer screen, light a candle, have a picture of a loved one?

Leaves with names is great idea works very well in Mount Argus every year, parishoners really like it

Remember to look at the lovely prayer prepared by our friends in the Kildare and Leighlin Diocesan Commission for Liturgical Formation:

<https://www.kandle.ie/november-resources/>

See also the National Centre for Liturgy resource of prayer for the Departed on their homepage liturgy-ireland.ie

Another possible Remembrance Idea inspired by Pope Francis:

As each name is read out, a member of the Funeral Team places a single flower on the steps in front of the altar – these can be a wide variety of types and colours, until a whole free bouquet of flowers lies before the altar. This was inspired by a homily of Pope Francis at Mass on the feast of All Souls, November 2nd 2016 in Prima Porta Cemetery Rome, in which he said:

“Job was in darkness. He was right at death’s door. And in that moment of anguish, pain and suffering, Job proclaimed hope: “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth... my eyes shall behold [him], and not another” (Job 19:25, 27). The commemoration of the dead has this twofold meaning. A sense of sorrow: a cemetery is sad, it reminds us of our loved ones who have passed on. It also reminds us of the future, of death.

But **in this sadness, we bring flowers, as a sign of hope**, and also, I might say, of celebration, but later on, not now. And sorrow is mingled with hope. Today, in this celebration, this is what we all feel: the memory of our loved ones, before their remains, and hope.

But we also feel that this hope helps us, because we too must make this journey. All of us must make this journey. Sooner or later, with more pain or less, but everyone must. However with the flower of hope, with that powerful thread that is anchored in the hereafter. Thus, the hope of resurrection still does not disappoint.

Jesus was the first to make this journey. We are following the journey that he made. And it was Jesus himself who opened the door: with his Cross he opened the door of hope, he opened the door for us to enter where we will contemplate God. “I know that my Redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth... I shall behold him, and not another, I shall. My eyes shall behold him, and not another”.

Let us return home today with this twofold remembrance: remembrance of the past, of our loved ones who have passed on; and remembrance of the future, of the journey that we will make. With certainty, security; that certainty came from Jesus’ lips: “I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn 6:40).

http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2016/documents/papa-francesco_20161102_omelia-fedeli-defunti.html