

NOMINATION FORM

You are invited to nominate someone in your parish community whom you believe fulfils the role description and criteria. Please ask the person's permission before nominating them.

All nominees will be invited to an information meeting after which they can decide if they would like to go forward for training which will involve approximately 3 evenings followed by practical experience in funeral ministry.

Name:

Address:

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Tel. (if known):

Why do you think this person might be suitable for funeral ministry?

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Nominated by:

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Please complete and detach this form and leave in the box in the porch of the Church by May 16th 2025. Thank you.

The information you provide will be held by the Archdiocese of Tuam, and used solely for the purposes outlined above, in accordance with its Data Protection Policy (GDPR).

Role description

- Delegated by the parish priest/administrator
- Acting in the name of the Church
- Basic knowledge of grief and bereavement
- Comfortable with Scripture
- Understanding of symbols and symbolic action
- Familiar with Funeral Rites (Order of Christian Funeral)
- Ability or willingness to lead public prayer, e.g. in the Funeral home, the home of the deceased, or at the graveside
- Voluntary supported role in service of the parish

Role criteria

- A Baptised Catholic and an active and practicing member of the Church community
- Reliable/responsible/respectful/compassionate
- Open to training and formation – training and ongoing support will be provided



Training in FUNERAL MINISTRY

A CALL TO SUPPORT

*"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,
who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort
those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves
have received from God."*

(2 Corinthians 1:3-4)

The Diocesan Funeral Resource Team – a working group which includes those engaged in Funeral Ministry from pastoral and professional perspectives - have been engaged in discussion and consultation on the funeral ministry needs in the Archdiocese of Tuam.

The Church recommends that when no priest or deacon is available for the removal from the funeral home, or the home of the deceased and graveside prayers in the cemetery, then a lay person can preside.

Parishes are now considering how to prepare people for this ministry which will involve training, through lay people and priests working together.

Background

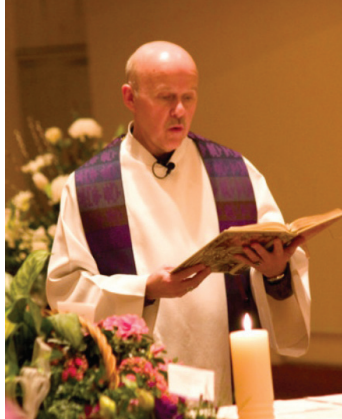
Since the earliest times, the Christian community has prayed for the deceased and accompanied bereaved people by gathering at the time of death.

Through these sacred practices, space is offered to the bereaved family to express grief and sorrow. They also provide an opportunity to celebrate the life and memory of the deceased person.

With changing circumstances in Church we need to look at how funerals are organised and celebrated.

We need to take into account the changing reality of Irish society today, including the ageing population and ever-increasing decline in the number of priests.

We must look to the immediate future when lay people will be more centrally involved in carrying out this ministry in parishes.



Why is Training in Funeral Ministry being introduced at this time?

Funeral Ministry, especially, has been seen as a ministry reserved to priests only. The priest attends those near death, is called to administer the Sacrament of Sick and is on hand at the time of a funeral to offer support to families and to organise and celebrate the different moments of the funeral liturgy.

This ministry is being introduced so that there will be trained people in our Christian communities, with the necessary skills and awareness, to take up some of these ministries in a time when there are fewer priests covering wider areas.

This ministry is not about taking over the role of the priest. There are aspects of Funeral Ministry, especially the Sacramental aspect, that can only be carried out by a priest. It is envisaged that laypersons will work alongside their priest, who will serve as a mentor and guide. Eventually, having become familiar with the rites and competent in their celebration, they will be ready to carry out their role on behalf of the community when that is required.

Funeral Ministry is open to any adult member of the Parish Community, with a sensitive and caring disposition, who has the time and pastoral skills needed to support the bereaved.

What is a Funeral Ministry Team?

Ministers of the Funeral Team represent the Church as they serve those who mourn the loss of a loved one. They should understand the Order of Christian Funerals and be compassionate and loving. As the order of Christian Funerals states,

“The Church calls each member of Christ’s body – priest, deacon, layperson to participate in the ministry of consolation: to care for the dying, to pray for the dead, to comfort those who mourn.”
(OCF 8)

Our goal is to ensure that grieving families are welcome, accepted and comfortable as we help them prepare for the funerals of their loved ones. We strive to bring compassion, comfort, and support and ensure that funerals are meaningful, positive, healing experiences for families.

What is their role?

Funeral Ministers support the bereaved and the work of the parish by:

- Visiting the bereaved family around the time of death, accompanied by the Priest
- Assisting in choosing Readings and Prayers
- Leading prayers at the funeral home, at the Church and/or the graveside
- Meet on a regular basis to pray for this Ministry, to arrange upcoming rota, and review funeral experiences and support one another
- Improve the Funeral Service to our Parish Community.

**Each Funeral Ministry team will work closely with their Parish Priest/Administrator, on a voluntary basis, to develop the role for their parish.*