

## Next Steps – Begin to Discern and Plan together

### Each parish in partnership:

1. Each parish community, in association with its partner parishes, is asked to take stock of its capacity to provide and sustain a funeral ministry that addresses current and future needs.
2. Parish partnerships should communicate to their communities the reasons for adopting a new model of funeral ministry, the need for lay funeral leaders and their roles.
3. Each parish is asked to establish a funeral ministry team where one does not currently exist, or seek to expand and develop it where it does.
4. The development of funeral ministry and the training and support of lay leaders lend themselves to joint initiatives by parish partnerships. Each parish partnership is therefore asked to foster cooperation and mutual support between their funeral teams.
5. In particular, each partnership is asked to plan to have, by the end of 2024, at least two lay leaders trained and commissioned to lead funeral services across the partnership, in line with pastoral needs.

### Diocesan supports:

1. The Archdiocese will refine the [online resources](#) available to support the [ministry](#) of funeral teams and to assist bereaved families in planning the funeral of deceased loved ones.
2. Training for new funeral team members and for those proposed by parishes for the role of leading funeral services will continue to be offered by the [Office of Mission and Ministry](#).

### PRAY together slowly

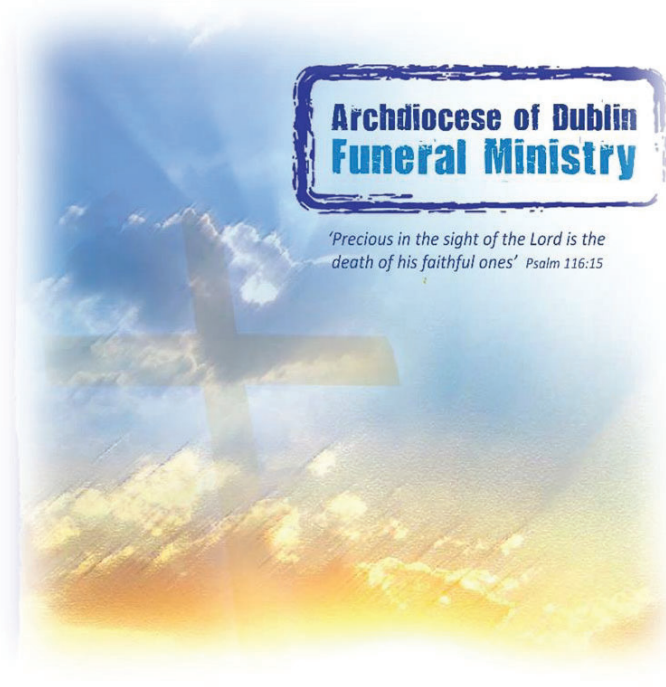
#### **A BLESSING FOR BUILDING HOPE**

May the Holy Spirit working in and through us  
do much more than we can dare to imagine  
as we live out our baptismal calling  
in humble and loving service.

We make this our prayer through Christ Our Lord.  
Amen.

## Pastoral Aid G

Building Hope



## Developing Funeral Ministry in our

## Parish Partnerships

Archdiocese of Dublin

Suggested format for gathering together pastoral council and funeral ministry representatives to advance the development of a new model of funeral ministry, in line with the existing policy of the Archdiocese (available [here](#)) and to meet challenges which are already evident.

### Welcome and introductions

Take time to welcome one another and to introduce yourself.

### Invitation to Prayer

Lighting of candle - Christ our Light and our Life

Invite someone to read the scripture passage aloud while all listen

A reading from the Gospel according to John 11:25-26

Jesus said:

I am the resurrection.

Anyone who believes in me,

even though that person dies, will live,

and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.

Do you believe this?

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

Reflect on the scripture in a synodal, prayerful, listening manner;

- After some silence share words or phrases which resonate with you.
- As each person shares, simply listen.
- When everyone who wishes to do so, has shared, gather all of the reflections together by praying together slowly;

**ALL:** Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones.

Psalm 116:15

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As you begin to work together to further develop Funeral Ministry, you are invited to (i) read together Archbishop Farrell's Pastoral Letter *Servants of Consolation and Witnesses of Hope: Ministry to the Bereaved in a Time of Change*, and then (ii) consider the following:

### Moving Forward Together

While not all parishes are currently experiencing pressure in maintaining the traditional model of funeral ministry, the accelerating decline in available priests is such that all parishes are now requested to take decisive steps towards implementing a new model of funeral ministry. This will entail giving practical effect to the full range of liturgical and pastoral options already envisaged in the current policy of the Archdiocese by:

1. encouraging parishioners to volunteer to train for funeral ministry (see Voluntary Ministry [Guidebook](#)), with particular reference to the recently retired who are likely to be available on weekdays, with a view to having sufficient trained funeral leaders to limit demands on individuals;
2. encouraging lay leaders with appropriate training to lead prayer in the home, funeral home, and crematorium/graveside (in pairs if this is preferred) and in those cases to participate in the prayers of commendation and be introduced to the congregation as the ones who will officiate at the final stage of the funeral liturgy;
3. encouraging trained members of funeral ministry teams to begin or continue to exercise their ministry by including them in (a) meetings with families, (b) leading prayer in the home, the funeral home and at the graveside/crematorium; and by (c) introducing them by name when they participate in funeral liturgies;
4. advising bereaved families of the identity and roles of members of funeral ministry teams;
5. encouraging bereaved families to consider the option of funeral liturgies without Mass where this may be pastorally appropriate;
6. underlining the legitimacy of funeral liturgies without Mass by their celebration, at least initially, by a priest or deacon with the participation of the funeral team;
7. providing volunteers with a clear framework within which their ministry will be exercised on satisfactory completion of training;
8. commissioning funeral team members before the congregation at Sunday Mass during which their role is explained.