

Guidelines for funerals

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...all things should be done decently and in order.... (1 Corinthians 14:40)

The Orthodox Liturgy of Death (a term used to describe all services – panikhidas, requiems, Divine Liturgies – that are usually celebrated in connection with death) presupposes that the deceased had been baptized, was a communicant of the Eucharist and, in life, strove to be obedient to the Lord’s commandments in pursuit of that “holiness without which no one will see God” (Hebrews 12:14).

Through prayer and remembrance, the function of the Liturgy of Death is to incorporate and affirm the departed in the death and resurrection of Christ, which

are the very content of the life of the Church. The primary – and probably only – function of the Liturgy of Death is to make and proclaim that connection – and even identification – between the death of each Christian and Christ’s death. “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:3).

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