



## Liturgical Guidelines for Commemorating the Death of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

Compiled from sources from the USCCB and the FDLC

Masses should be offered for the late Pope's intention, but Masses for the Dead may NOT be offered on the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.

Naturally, special petitions can be offered in the Universal Prayer. The following are provided as examples:

- That Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI, called to the heavenly kingdom by the Lord, may rejoice forever at the banquet table of heaven, we pray to the Lord.
- That Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI, who served the Church as Supreme Pontiff for eight years, may worship God for ever in the liturgy of heaven, we pray to the Lord.
- That the tireless efforts of Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI, now called to the Lord, may bear fruit in unity, peace and love among all men and women, we pray to the Lord.
- For Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI, who preached that God is love and that we are saved in hope, that he may know God's love forever in heaven, we pray to the Lord.

The first section of "Various Prayers for the Dead" in the *Roman Missal* includes three Mass formularies for a Pope (A, B, and C). As with all Masses for the Dead, the prayers of the various formularies are interchangeable. The celebrant may or may not wish to insert the word "Emeritus" when naming Benedict XVI.

In the Eucharistic Prayer, any of the Prefaces for the Dead (I-V) may be used. The formula for mentioning the name of the current Pope in the Eucharistic Prayer is to be followed as usual (i.e., "Francis our Pope and Michael our Bishop"). The naming of the deceased Pope Emeritus is best done during the intercession for the dead, as provided in Eucharistic Prayers I-III: "your servant Benedict, our Pope (Emeritus)."

It would be especially appropriate to offer Mass on day of his funeral Mass, January 5. Votive Mass for the Death of a Pope in Roman Missal may be used. (there are three options given). Purple, Black, White — or even Red vestments may be worn for the funeral Mass of the Pope (Red, as we are mourning the death of the successor of the Apostle Peter). Of course, the *Order of Christian Funerals*, the *Liturgy of the Hours* (for the Dead), the *Roman Missal* (Masses for the Dead), and the *Lectioary for Mass* (nos. 1011-1016) will also offer you specific resources...as the liturgical day allows.

The Liturgy of the Hours would be an appropriate way to gather for prayer.

All parishioners, including children, should be encouraged to pray for Pope Benedict XVI, even with a simple *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, and *Glory be*. The above petitions or following prayer from the Vatican could also be used.

If available, a photograph/image of the late Pope Emeritus should be displayed on an easel in the Sanctuary, or other appropriate place, with flowers, a votive candle, and perhaps black bunting.

## A prayer for the soul of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

Father, eternal shepherd,  
hear the prayers of your people for your servant Benedict,  
who governed your Church with love.

In your mercy, bring him with the flock once entrusted to his care  
to the reward you have promised your faithful servants.

May he who faithfully administered the mysteries  
of your forgiveness and love on earth,  
rejoice with you for ever in heaven.

In your wise and loving care,  
you made your servant teacher of all your Church.  
He did the work of Christ on earth.

May your Son welcome him into eternal glory.

May your servant whom you appointed high priest of your flock  
be counted now among the priests in the life of your kingdom.

Give your servant the reward of eternal happiness  
and let your mercy win for us the gift of your life and love.

We entrust your servant to your mercy with faith and confidence.  
In the human family he was an instrument of your peace and love.

May he rejoice in those gifts for ever with your saints.  
Amen.

### A powerful excerpt from Pope Benedict XVI's first homily as Pope after Pope John Paul II's passing:

“How alone we all felt after the passing of John Paul II – the Pope who for over twenty-six years had been our shepherd and guide on our journey through life. He crossed the threshold of the next life, entering into the mystery of God. But he did not take this step alone. Those who believe are never alone – neither in life nor in death. At that moment, we could call upon the Saints from every age – his friends, his brothers, and sisters in the faith – knowing that they would form a living procession to accompany him into the next world, into the glory of God...

I too can say with renewed conviction: I am not alone. All the Saints of God are there to protect me, to sustain me, and to carry me. And your prayers, my dear friends, your indulgence, your love, your faith, and your hope accompany me.”

Pope Benedict XVI