



## DIOCESE OF METUCHEN

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DEPARTMENT OF WORSHIP  
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### MEMORANDUM

TO: All Priests, Deacons and Funeral Directors

FROM: Msgr. Michael J. Alliegro

DATE: April 7, 2004

RE: EULOGIES DURING THE RITES OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL

The following is a re-cap of the diocesan policy on eulogies which was originally issued in February, 2001. At the most recent meeting of the Presbyteral Council representatives asked if the policy could be re-stated, especially for the benefit of recently appointed pastors and administrators. Bishop Bootkoski emphasized that the policy remains essentially unchanged. He also urged that pastors share this policy with local funeral directors.

On All Souls Day, November 2, 1989, the use of the Order of Christian Funerals [OCF] became mandatory in all the dioceses of the United States of America. Since that time, a growing concern has been raised about the eulogy permitted by rubric #170: After Communion, a member or a friend of the family may speak in remembrance of the deceased before the final commendation begins.

This rubric implies that one—and only one—person may speak in remembrance of the deceased. However, the intention of this rubric is often violated in many ways: numerous people speak, rather than just one person; comments that are inappropriate, and at times, contrary to the Gospel have been made. For these reasons, the following is to be put into effect immediately:

Although the Order of Christian Funerals [OCF] permits a member or friend of the family to speak in remembrance of the deceased before the final commendation begins, this 'eulogy' is permitted in the Diocese of Metuchen on the following conditions:

- 1) Only one person may speak.
- 2) It should be brief, not to exceed three minutes
- 3) A written copy, or at least an outline, must be given to the presider beforehand, to guarantee it is properly focused and consistent with our Catholic faith and the ideals of Christian burial.
- 4) It is preferable that this "eulogy" take place outside the context of Mass,  
i.e. at the Vigil Service at the Funeral Home, or at the Committal Rite and the Place of Committal, between Concluding Prayer and before the final Blessing.

Please share this policy with parish staff, bereavement teams, funeral planners, and area funeral directors. A Pastor may not forbid a eulogy on his own initiative. However, he may absolutely require that conditions 1-3 be met in order for a eulogy to take place at Mass.