

Before choosing flowers for a Catholic funeral, check the family's wishes and ask about any rules from the church or funeral home. A modest arrangement in gentle colors is often suitable, but the service location and delivery time should guide your choice.

Check what the family prefers

Read the funeral notice before making arrangements. It may ask guests to donate to a cause instead of sending flowers, name a preferred color, or give instructions about where flowers should go. Respect those requests, even if you had planned to send something different.

If the notice offers no guidance, contact the funeral home or someone who knows the family well. Ask if flowers are welcome at the visitation, funeral Mass, or burial, and where they should be delivered. If you can get the information from someone other than a grieving relative, do so to avoid adding to that person's responsibilities.

Church customs are not the same everywhere. Some churches restrict flowers near the altar, and seasonal practices or the arrangement of the space can affect what is allowed. The funeral director may be able to coordinate with church staff and explain where flowers can be placed.

Select flowers and decide where to send them

Lilies, roses, chrysanthemums, and carnations are frequently used in funeral arrangements. White and other pale colors can give a quiet, understated impression, but Catholic funerals do not require a particular color. Choosing a flower or shade that the person liked is another way to make the tribute personal.

Think about the available space and who will receive the arrangement. A standing spray is large and needs room at a funeral home. A small vase arrangement may be simpler for a family to manage at home. If you are uncertain about the right size, tell the florist preparing it where it will be sent and what kind of service is planned.

- **Funeral home:** A standing spray, basket, or vase of flowers may be suitable. Confirm the delivery time with the funeral director so the arrangement arrives at an appropriate time.
- **Church:** Ask about permission and placement before arranging delivery there. The church may have rules about flowers in the sanctuary, so do not assume an arrangement can be left near the altar.
- **Family home:** A small vase arrangement can be a gentle way to show support after the service. It takes up less room than a large display and may be easier to receive.

Attach a brief card and include your name, so the family can identify who sent the flowers. A simple note such as “With sympathy” or “Keeping your family in my prayers” is enough. If you knew the person, you can also share a short and sincere memory.

Common questions about funeral flowers

Do Catholic funerals require flowers?

No. Flowers are a way to express sympathy, not an obligation. You can show care with a card, a donation the family has requested, or by attending the service.

May I send flowers if I am not Catholic?

Yes. You do not have to share the family’s faith to send flowers. Follow any instructions they have given and keep your card respectful.

Who chooses flowers for the casket?

The immediate family often selects the flowers that go on the casket. Unless they have asked you to arrange those flowers, choose a separate tribute instead.

Can I send flowers after the funeral?

Yes. A small arrangement sent to the family’s home after the service can still be thoughtful. Check the delivery address and choose a date when someone is likely to be there to receive it.

Further reading: see more