

Instructions for Masses and Prayers on the death of His Holiness, Pope Francis (updated April 22, 2025):

The Funeral Mass for Pope Francis will be offered on Saturday, April 26, 2025. On that day, parishes in the Diocese of Sacramento may offer a Memorial Mass for the eternal rest of His Holiness. Church bells may be tolled at the time of that Mass.

All the parishes and parochial schools are encouraged to offer prayers for the deceased Pontiff. The custom of praying the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be to the Father is to be encouraged, especially with school children, as is the recitation of the Rosary for the repose of his soul. Churches may display a portrait of the late Holy Father with black bunting.

It is the custom that the nine days beginning with the day of the funeral of a Pope are observed as official days of mourning in Rome and throughout the Church. The *Novendiales*, as they are called, may be observed in different ways. In addition to the celebration of Mass, public prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours, Eucharistic and other devotional prayer, lectures on the teaching and legacy of the Pope, activities for the relief of the poor offered for the intention of his soul, or other such initiatives may be held. A sample set of novena prayers is available on the USCCB website (<https://www.usccb.org/resources/liturgical-resources-death-pope-francis>).

- Note that the first section of “Various Prayers for the Dead” in the Roman Missal includes three Mass formularies for a Pope (forms A, B, and C). As with all Masses for the Dead, the prayers of the various formularies are interchangeable.
- Recall the instruction of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal:

381. A Mass for the Dead, on receiving the news of a death, for the final burial, or the first anniversary, may be celebrated even on days within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord, on days when an Obligatory Memorial occurs, and on weekdays other than Ash Wednesday or the weekdays of Holy Week.

Other Masses for the Dead or “daily” Masses, may be celebrated on weekdays in Ordinary Time on which Optional Memorials occur or when the Office is of the weekday, provided such Masses are actually applied for the dead.

[Note: a Mass for the Pope may be offered during the Easter octave.]

- In the United States, the vestment colors violet, white, or black may be used in Masses and Offices for the Dead (see GIRM, no. 346e). However, it is customary for red vestments to be worn at a Mass for the Dead offered for a Pope since we are mourning the death of the successor of the Apostle Peter.
- Naturally, special petitions can be offered in the Universal Prayer at Masses celebrated for the repose of the Pope. The following are provided as examples:
 - That Pope Francis, called to the heavenly kingdom by the Lord, may rejoice forever at the banquet table of heaven, we pray to the Lord.
 - That Pope Francis, who served the Church as Supreme Pontiff for 12 years, may worship God for ever in the liturgy of heaven, we pray to the Lord.

- That the tireless efforts of Pope Francis, now called the Lord, may bear fruit in unity, peace and love among all men and women, we pray to the Lord.
 - For Pope Francis, who preached that God is love and that we are saved in hope, may know God's love forever in heaven, we pray to the Lord.
 - Para que el Papa Francisco, llamado al reino celestial por el Señor, se regocije para siempre en la mesa del banquete del cielo, roguemos al Señor.
 - Para que el Papa Francisco, que sirvió a la Iglesia como Sumo Pontífice durante 12 años, pueda adorar a Dios para siempre en la liturgia del cielo, roguemos al Señor.
 - Para que los esfuerzos incansables del Papa Francisco, ahora llamado al Señor, den fruto en unidad, paz y amor entre todos los hombres y mujeres, roguemos al Señor.
 - Por el Papa Francisco, que predicó que Dios es amor y que somos salvos en la esperanza, para que pueda conocer el amor de Dios para siempre en el cielo, roguemos al Señor.
- In the Eucharistic Prayer, any of the Prefaces for the Dead (I-V) may be used. The formula for mentioning the name of the Pope in the Eucharistic Prayer (“[your servant] N., our Pope”) is omitted during the time between Popes. The naming of the deceased Pope is best done during the intercession for the dead, as provided in Eucharistic Prayers I-III: “your servant Francis, our Pope.”
 - Communities and individuals can pray the Office of the Dead in the Liturgy of the Hours for the intention of the Holy Father. In a public celebration of Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer, a priest, or deacon could give a brief homily following the reading. A reflection on the life of the former Pope might best be given after the concluding prayer and before the dismissal.
 - Flags are to be flown at half-staff from April 21, 2025 through May 4, 2025.