

---

## Consultation and Discernment Process Overview

### **Purpose and Aim:**

To revise the existing Diocesan Guidelines for Funerals, issued as interim in 2002 - *Celebrating Life and Death Together*.

### **Rationale:**

Over the past 18 months there has been an increase in questions from parishes regarding the Funeral Rites and requests for some support, guidance or guidelines.

The current guidelines are out of date and no longer relevant to today's circumstances.

The social context of bereavement and funeral ministry has changed significantly and parishes face new challenges.

### **Responsibility for the process:**

The Diocesan Liturgy Council (DLC), as the Bishop's advisory body for liturgy, with a Working Party, is responsible for the review process.

The DLC, in consultation with the Bishop, will make final decisions regarding the content and wording of the draft guidelines/guidance.

### **Steps in the process:**

#### **Step 1: Survey of all parishes using Survey Monkey**

Aim: To establish the current picture of bereavement and funeral ministry in the diocese.

#### **Step 2: Reflective Dialogue 1**

Target Group: The Church including clergy, all those involved in parish Funeral Ministry and visitation of hospitals and aged care facilities, schools, chaplains, Pastoral Workers at Calvary Aged Care Facilities, Calvary Mater Pastoral Care Team, Religious Orders and all interested parishioners.

Aim: To engage in reflective dialogue with the Catholic community to:

- Listen to the community's experience of Funeral Ministry, with specific regard to the use of the Funeral Rites as found in the *Order of Christian Funerals*;
- Identify issues and questions;
- Engage in reflective dialogue about issues and questions (as time allows);
- identify what guidance, guidelines and resources might assist parishes in ministry with the dying and bereaved.

Flyers with detail regarding venues, dates and times will be available.

### **Step 3: Collate information from dialogue and determine the next step**

In light of the data from reflective Dialogue 1, the Funeral Guidelines Working Party, with DLC, determines the next step:

- schedule further dialogue on issues and questions  
OR
- draft Pastoral Guidance document (in consult with Bishop Bill) for people to consider.

### **Step 4: EITHER**

#### **Reflective Dialogue 2 – questions and issues**

Scheduled if there is a need for further dialogue:

- around specific issues and questions raised in Reflective Dialogue 1;  
OR
- there is a need for dialogue with specific groups e.g. Clergy, Parish Funeral Ministry Teams, cultural/national groups and communities who use other rites.

**OR**

#### **Reflective Dialogue 2 – Draft Guidance and Guidelines for the DoMN**

Aim: To engage in reflective dialogue with the Catholic community and other key stakeholders to:

- Listen to reflections on the draft document: strengths, issues and questions
- Identify sections for further development/revision

Flyers with detail regarding venues, dates and times will be available.

### **Step 5: Finalise DRAFT Pastoral Guidance - Guidelines, Procedures, Resources**

#### ***Process:***

Draft Guidelines are:

- revised by Working Party and DLC review
- reviewed by Bishop Bill
- further revisions made as required.

### **Step 6: DRAFT document disseminated to parishes**

With information for review prior to finalisation and process for ongoing review established.

- Through the Church: to parishes and other groups as determined.
  - To clergy – with a Workshop as appropriate
  - To parish bereavement teams via a workshop as appropriate
- To Funeral Directors – via a workshop with the aim of discussing it and to listening to comments and questions.