

Planning arrangements to mark the move to eternity

By Father Paul J. Cuddy
Catholic Courier columnist

To Auburn City Judge James G. Cuddy, my nephew:

I have just spent three days at Mt. Saviour Monastery near Elmira, and while there, updated my will and wrote my arrangements for my funeral. When that will be, only God knows. My father dropped dead at 83, and I am now 80 — certainly ripe for eternity. Now I wish to charge you to see my funeral arrangements are carried out. Regarding them, the bishop's office will get in touch with you, and vice versa.

Should the funeral be at Holy Family, Auburn, our family parish for four generations and the place of my baptism and first Mass? Or at St. Alphonsus, where I am in residence, and where the pastor, Father Foster Rogers, is so kind? We can discuss this as time goes on.

Regarding the Mass, Father Bill Cuddy of Syracuse has accepted to preach the homily for the Mass of Christ the High Priest, the night before. And Father Tom Brennan for the morning funeral Mass. He's in Corning, and you might provide hospitality for him and for whoever comes with him,

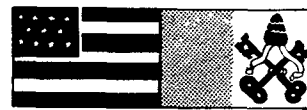
probably Fathers Joe Hogan and Bob MacNamara, both special friends to me.

I think it is protocol for one of the bishops to be the main celebrant, but my classmates, Fathers Raymond Heisel, William Gaynor and Harold Rogers, as well as nephew, Father Bill, should be shoulder-to-shoulder with him. With them, of course, will be my faithful Clyde assistants, Fathers Henry Adamski, Joe Gaynor and Bob Eagan. And also my pastor for 15 years, Father William Hart of Webster.

If I leave this mortal coil soon, there should still be a good gathering of older clergy who can sing the Latin hymns, like the Kyrie and Sanctus, and they could carry the congregation. While in Elmira, I had dinner with Fathers Paul McCabe and Ed Golden. We discussed the funeral. I said: "I'd like the 'In Paradisum' for the exit hymn, but I think hardly anyone remembers it." Father McCabe said indignantly — he's inclined to be apodictic: "Of course they do! And you should have the 'Salve, Regina.' They all know that too." So let's arrange for those.

As the assembly gathers for Mass, I want Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" to

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be played. That sublime melody prepares people for devotion. The Kyrie and Sanctus older people remember, though deprived of the joy of singing them for many years despite the directions of Vatican II. For the Offertory, the "Panis Angelicus." I love the melody. I love the words: "Oh Bread of angels become the Bread of men."

Let's use Marlotte's "Our Father," but not too loud. In some places, congregations get carried away at the at the doxology and bellow like a bursting boiler. After the "Salve Regina" and the "In Paradisum," have the organist softly play some Irish airs which would be fitting for one who has escorted so many to Ireland.

For pall bearers, lectors and offertory procession, from 21 nieces and nephews and 84 great nieces and nephews you better select from the progeny of my brothers, Frank, Ray, Joe, your father George, and my sister Florence McLane in Syracuse.

Wakes and funerals are wonderful occasions for relatives and friends to get together. I want everyone to enjoy the occasion. I'm sure tales from my life, both true and embellished, will surface to arouse the risibilities of many. That is as it should be. But apart from the festivities, I hope everyone will remember to pray for my soul. I have tried to serve Our Lord, Our Lady and the people faithfully, but I am conscious of many failures, and am glad to make the purgatorial amends, grateful that redemption comes from the Precious Blood of Our Lord.

I don't know when this great affair will be, but I am glad to have the will updated and the funeral plans set. It makes it easier for all concerned when the day does come. Since brother Joe, on whom I had relied for so many things, died, I have turned to you and am grateful that you have been a reliable successor to him. My love to Laila and the children.

Jesus, the resurrection and the life, answers prayer

By Cindy Bassett
Catholic Courier columnist

"Jesus is coming," someone in the room of mourners said to the two sisters, Martha and Mary. "He is on the road just outside of the village."

"Why does he answer our message now?" Mary asked between sobs. "It's too late. Lazarus is dead!"

Many of the relatives who had gathered at the house rushed over now to console Mary. All felt helpless to do anything to ease the sisters' sorrow over the death of the brother they both loved so much.

Martha left her sister surrounded by friends and relatives in the house. She followed the road out of Bethany until she met Jesus.

"Oh, Jesus," she cried when she saw him, "if only you had been here, I know that Lazarus would be alive now."

"Martha, your brother will rise again," Jesus said.

"Of course he will, Lord," Martha agreed, "with everyone else on the last day."

"I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me never really dies. Do you believe this, Martha?" Jesus asked.

"Yes, I know that you are the Messiah promised long ago by God to the people of Israel," she answered.

Just about this time, they were joined on the road by Mary, who was followed by a large group of mourners. "If you could have just been here in time, Jesus, Lazarus would be alive now," Mary sobbed, echoing the words of her sister.

Jesus was very distressed when he saw her great anguish.

"Bring me to the tomb," he said.

As soon as they arrived at the hillside where a tomb had been carved into the rock, he told some of the men, "Roll the

stone away!"

Martha's practical nature prevented them from carrying out Jesus' request immediately. "Lord, the body has been in the grave for nearly four days now," she said. "There is certain to be a terrible odor of decay."

But all Jesus said in reply was, "Martha, didn't I promise that if you believed, you would see God's glory?"

Jesus motioned to the men. They rolled the huge stone back to expose a dark opening that led to the tomb of Lazarus.

Jesus' prayer was deliberately loud, and everyone heard him say the words: "Thank you, Father, for always listening to me. For you hear even the prayers that remain in our hearts. I say this aloud now so that they will believe that you sent me."

Everyone already sensed that the seemingly impossible was about to occur. Their

eyes were riveted on the opening to the tomb when Jesus commanded "Lazarus come forth!"

Soon a man, still wrapped in burial garments, stood at the entrance in the full light of day. The crowd was stunned.

So Jesus commanded, "Unbind Lazarus and let him go free!"

"A dead man rising from the grave! Only God could have done such a miracle!" the people marvelled.

Even so, there were some that day who deliberately set aside what their own eyes

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had witnessed. Instead, they rushed back to Jerusalem to report their findings about Jesus to the chief priest at the temple.

Scripture reference: John 11: 1-44. Meditation: Jesus, you are the resurrection and the life. You answer every prayer in your own time and way.

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