

# Funeral Flowers

*The circle of life...*



*Make your goodbye special*

Saying goodbye to a loved one is the most painful experience one can go through. Celebrating their life and your love for them at such a difficult, heartbreaking time can seem unfathomable, but funerals help us begin the healing process when it's time to say farewell.

Arranging the funeral is a daunting task, particularly when upset and emotional. The flowers are a significant aspect to most funerals and do need a lot of attention when preparing to say goodbye to someone in a way that will be special and meaningful.

Just as everyone is individual, funeral flowers are just as personal. Whether traditional white flowers or bright and cheery flowers, it all comes down to particular taste and style.

Seasonal availability may pose a problem if looking for specific species, but your florist will know of alternatives. Colours of flowers more so than types of flowers are what is usually of concern.

The church or venue flowers and the casket arrangements are decided by the family members. Discuss with your florist the colours preferred and the deceased's favourite flowers. Your florist will arrange the appropriate displays for the service and to decorate the top of the casket.

Usually your florist will deliver the flowers to the church or funeral parlour if pre-arranged with the family. If the flowers are to be taken home first, they can be placed in containers to help preserve them for the service.

When saying goodbye to the departed, the viewing of the body occurs first. The wearing of buttonholes at the viewing has become more customary in recent years. The addition of black ribbon to the buttonhole is an idea that helps convey your sympathy. Seeing the deceased, perhaps for the first time, can be overwhelming, and flowers are an effective way to express yourself at a time where words often cannot do justice.

The most popular form of arrangement for funerals is the funeral wreath. Representing the circle of life, it serves as an enduring sign of love and sympathy. Created with any assortment of flowers, the wreath is one of the oldest tributes to a loved one. Traditional funeral wreaths tend to feature white flowers, but brightly coloured wreaths have become more popular in celebrating the life of the departed. Polystyrene bases for wreaths are not used so much anymore due to them not being biodegradable and churches strongly disliking them.

Funeral sheafs are also a common choice. The flatback sheaf is a flat presentation of flowers and offers an alternative look to the wreath. It is another effective way to express your sincerest condolences.

Small tribute posies are also appropriate for funerals. Bouquets are not necessarily a good idea as the paper and plastic around the flowers are not biodegradable and become a problem at the gravesite, just like the polystyrene wreath bases.

The tribute burial flowers are single flowers each family member places onto the casket as it is lowered into the ground. It is a softer touch compared to the throwing of soil on top of the casket. Again these flowers can be whichever type of flower the family chooses but it is often the favourite of the deceased.

Letting guests take home some flowers from the casket sheaf makes for a nice memento. If little posies are made from the flowers, tied up and handed out to the guests, it is a touching gesture that allows people to take their thoughts and memories home with them in a physical form.

When a non-family member is purchasing sympathy flowers there are no boundaries. A personal tribute is just that, completely personal. Choosing your floral offering is one of the final acts of saying goodbye to someone you care about. Often it can be difficult to make decisions at this time, so the main aspects to keep in mind are the colours you would like, the type of arrangement and your budget. Most florists are experienced in organising funeral flowers and providing the necessary advice and support to help you choose flowers that are appropriate.

Although choosing funeral flowers is up to the individual, there are some traditional sympathy flowers. Below is a list of some suggestions and their meanings or what they signify.

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| White Chrysanthemum  | - signifies truth and honesty  |
| Red Chrysanthemum    | - means: I love  |
| Yellow Chrysanthemum | - means: Slighted love   |
| Red Carnations       | - signifies passion, strength of feeling   |
| Roses (red)          | - signifies passion, strength of feeling. Means: Love; I love you; Respect; Courage                        |
| (pink)               | - means: Perfect happiness; Gentility; Grace; Please believe me  |
| (deep pink)          | - means: Thank you   |
| (light pink)         | - means: Admiration  |
| (yellow)             | - signifies love. Means: Friendship; Joy and happiness   |
| (white)              | - signifies innocence. Means: Innocence; Purity; Heavenly; Secrecy; Silence; Charm                         |
| (peach/coral)        | - means: Enthusiasm; Desire  |
| (orange)             | - means: Enthusiasm; Desire  |
| (red and white)      | - means: Unity   |
| (single red)         | - means: simplicity; I love you  |
| (long stemmed)       | - means: I will remember you always  |
| Iris                 | - signifies faithfulness and hope.<br>Means: Faith; Wisdom; Valour; Promise; My compliments; Hope; Message |
| Lilies               | - very traditional funeral flower  |
| (Calla)              | - means: Beauty  |
| (Day)                | - means: Coquetry  |
| (Eucharis)           | - means: Maiden Charms   |
| (Tiger)              | - means: Wealth; Pride; Prosperity   |
| Lily of the Valley   | - means: Sweetness; Humility; Return of happiness  |



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