

# What happens when you're unprepared for the inevitable?

**By Bruce Hultquist**

*Provided by the Redemptorists*

If your parent, sibling, child or best friend died today, what would you do tomorrow? Instead of going to work or school and doing your normal routine, you would have to start making burial and funeral arrangements for your loved one. You would spend hours at the funeral home and the cemetery being bombarded with questions, making hundreds of decisions and spending thousands of dollars on the final arrangements without knowing exactly what your loved one would have wanted.

The death of a loved one is incredibly difficult to consider and a thought that we all would like to ignore completely. It is common for people to put these things out of their minds, as though it will allow them to avoid the inevitable. Even when it's expected, our emotions are never fully prepared when someone passes away.

I once worked with a family whose patriarch went in for a routine medical procedure and never regained consciousness. His loved ones were devastated at their loss and had the added burden of making all of his funeral arrangements in the midst of their grief. After being forced to make rational decisions, despite the overwhelming emotions, the son asked, "When do I get to mourn?" Planning a funeral is painful and you don't get the opportunity to grieve when you are trying to keep your emotions at bay so the final arrangements can be managed properly.

Few parents would let their child pay for a purchase that costs thousands of dollars, but that is exactly what happens when a parent does not pre-plan his or her final arrangements.

The burden of planning a funeral and burial can be avoided by making all the necessary decisions ahead of time. It is the best way to ensure that every final wish will be met and alleviates financial burdens for remaining loved ones. Pre-arranging gives family and friends the opportunity to reflect on the pleasant memories, instead of stressing about budgets and decisions to be made.

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