

Order for the Naming and Commendation

of an infant who died before birth

*He shall gather the lambs in His arms and
hold them close to His heart.*

-Isaiah 40:11

Archdiocese of Baltimore

As Sacraments of the Church are for the living, it is not possible to baptize a child who dies before birth. In recognition and celebration of the dignity of each and every human life, the Church offers this service, which includes the Rite of Committal and a Rite of Final Commendation for an Infant.

The Order for the Naming and Commendation of an Infant seeks to set the death of an infant within the context of faith, and to unite the grieving parents and family members to the merciful God, whose love was revealed for us in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The rite is not intended to offer certainty to parents, but to provide them with a celebration based on Christian faith and hope.

Archdiocese of Baltimore
Respect Life Office
320 Cathedral St.
Baltimore, MD 21201
(410) 547-5537
life@archbalt.org

**Adapted with permission from the *Order for the Naming and Commendation of an Infant Who Died before Birth*, Office of Worship,
Archdiocese of St. Louis, Missouri, 1990**

Introductory Rites

When all have gathered, a suitable song may be sung.

Priest/Dcn: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and
of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Priest/Dcn: May the peace and consolation of the Lord be
with you.

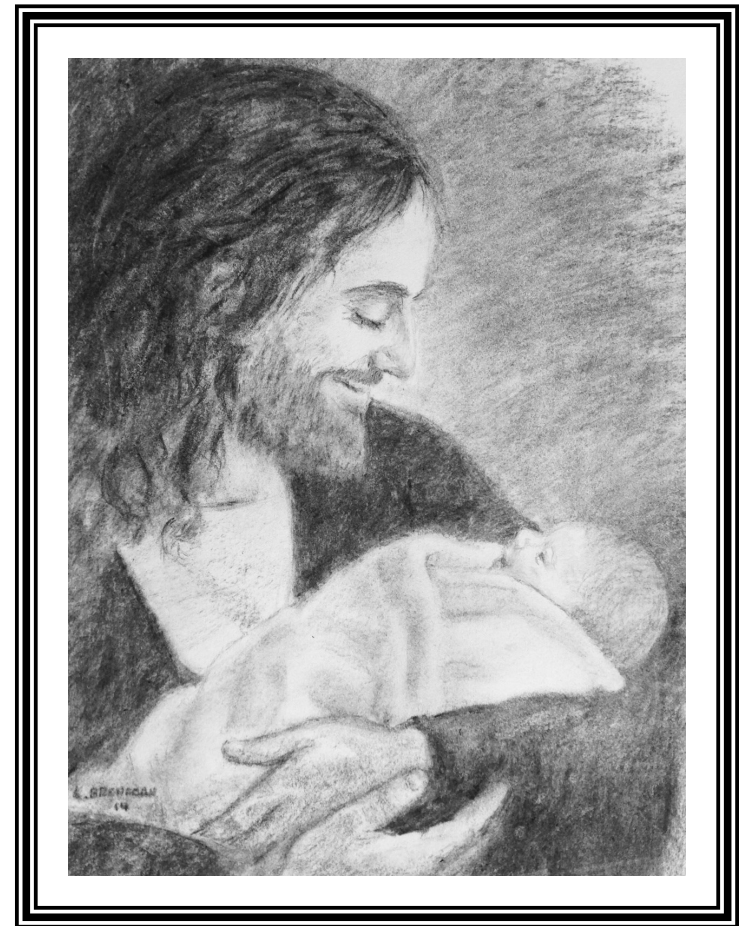
All: And also with you.

Or:

Lay leader: Let us praise the Father of mercies, the God of
all consolation. Blessed be God forever.

All: Blessed be God forever.

Leader: For those who trust in God,
in the pain of sorrow there is consolation,
in the face of despair there is hope,
in the midst of death there is life.
(Parents' Names), as we mourn the death of
your child we place ourselves in the hands
of God and ask strength, for healing and
for love.



*I am the Lord,
your God and tender Father,
And you are Mine forever.
In the music of My love
The child that your heart is
Yearning for is peaceful
And with Me now,
And resting, O so sweetly,
in My arms.*

Blessing

Priest or Deacon: May the God of all consolation
Bring you comfort and peace,
In the name of the Father, +
And of the Son, and of the
Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Lay minister: May the God of all consolation
Bring us comfort and peace,
In the name of the Father,
And of the Son, and of the
Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

The celebration may end with a suitable song.

Naming of the Child

Leader: What name do you give your child?

Parent(s) respond: _____

*If the child's body is present, the leader, parents,
and others present may trace the sign of the cross
on his or her body or on the casket. The minister
first says:*

Leader: In the name of the Christian community I sign
N. (or this child) with the sign of the cross and
I invite his/her parents (and those who are
here present) to do the same.

Reading of the Word of God

Leader: *A reading from the Gospel of Mark:*

*People were bringing children to Jesus that he might
touch them, but the disciples rebuked the people. When Je-
sus saw this he became indignant and said to the disciples,
“Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the
kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Amen, I say to
you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God like a
child will not enter it. Then he embraced the children and
blessed them, placing his hands on them.*

*Alternative Readings: Isaiah 49:8-13; Romans 8:18-27;
Romans 8:26-31; Colossians 1:9-12; Mark 10:13-16*

Leader: Let us pray to God who throughout the ages
has heard the cries of parents.

Compassionate God,
soothe the hearts of N. and N. (parents),
(and grandparents, siblings and loved ones),
and grant that through the prayers of Mary,
who grieved by the cross of her Son,
you may enlighten their faith,
give hope to their hearts,
and peace to their lives.

Lord,
grant mercy to all the members of this family
and comfort them with the hope
that one day we will all live with you,
with your Son Jesus Christ,
and the Holy Spirit,
Forever and ever.

All: Amen

Blessing of the Body

Leader: Trusting in Jesus, the loving Savior,
who gathered children into his arms
and blessed the little ones,
we now commend this infant (name)
to that same embrace of love,
in the hope that he/she will rejoice
and be happy in the presence of Christ.

All: May the angels and saints lead him/her
to the place of light and peace
where one day
we will be brought together again.

Leader: Lord Jesus,
tenderly receive this little child;
bless him/her
and take him/her to your Father.
We ask this in hope,
and we pray:

Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader: Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

All: Our Father . . .

Prayer of Commendation

Leader: Tender Shepherd of the flock,
(name) now lies cradled in your love.
Soothe the hearts of his/her parents
and bring peace to their lives.
Enlighten their faith
and give hope to their hearts.

Loving Father,
grant mercy to your entire family
in this time of suffering.
Comfort us with the hope that this child (name)
lives with you and your Son, Jesus Christ,
and the Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever.

All: Amen