

# Funeral Liturgy Planning Booklet

Saint Eleanor Parish

Collegeville, PA

Dear friends,

In this time of loss, we rightfully turn to the Lord and ask for His mercy on the soul of our departed loved one. Our prayer is that this person will soon be accepted into the eternal joy of heaven. Also, we pray that we who mourn will be comforted by the consoling grace of God.

You are invited to select certain aspects of the Funeral Liturgy. Please use this booklet to help you make these selections. Once you have made your selections of readings and hymns, please return the enclosed form to the Rectory as soon as possible.

Please decide the following:

- Placement of the Pall (*will family members participate?*)
- The two readings: one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament. In the Easter Season (Easter Sunday to Pentecost), the first reading is from the New Testament, as indicated in this booklet (*please select readers who are able to proclaim the scriptures well so that all will understand the messages; otherwise, the Parish can provide a reader*).
- A reader for the Prayer of the Faithful / General Intercessions (*please select a reader; otherwise, the Parish can provide*).
- Participants (*usually two*) for the Offertory Procession
- Four Hymns & Responsorial Psalm (*The Parish's Director of Music will be more than happy to plan the hymn and Responsorial Psalm selections for you. However, if you have any particular hymns you'd like to request, a listing of hymns suitable for the Funeral Mass is included in this booklet*).

Only five flower arrangements should be brought into the Church. These five pieces are the family flowers. *We ask you to consider, in lieu of flowers, to have donations made to the SAINT ELEANOR MEMORIAL FUND.* This will provide a lasting remembrance of your loved one whenever the Liturgy is celebrated at Saint Eleanor Church.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of the priests at the Parish Office or Dan Weckerly, Director of Music at (610) 454-0498 or (610) 574-1605.

Sincerely in the risen Christ,

Monsignor Michael T. McCulken, *Pastor*

## **Suggested Funeral Readings**

### **OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES FOR THE FIRST READING**

#### **1) 2 Maccabees 12:43-46**

Judas, the ruler of Israel, took up a collection among all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice.

In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death.

But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought.

Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin.

#### **2) Job 19:1, 23-27a**

Job answered Bildad the Shuhite and said:

Oh, would that my words were written down!

Would that they were inscribed in a record: That with an iron chisel and with lead they were cut in the rock forever!

But as for me, I know that my Vindicator lives, and that he will at last stand forth upon the dust;

Whom I myself shall see: my own eyes, not another's shall behold him;

And from my flesh I shall see God; my inmost being is consumed with longing.

#### **3a) Wisdom 3:1-9 LONG FORM**

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in the view of the foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from us, utter destruction.

But they are in peace.

For if before men, indeed they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality;

Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy  
of himself.

As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.

In the time of their visitation they shall shine, and shall dart about as sparks through stubble;

They shall judge nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord shall be their King forever.

Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love:

Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with his elect.

### **3b) Wisdom 3:1-6. 9 SHORT FORM**

*A reading from the Book of Wisdom*

The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. They seemed, in  
the view of the

foolish, to be dead; and their passing away was thought an affliction and their going forth from  
us, utter destruction.

But they are in peace.

For if before men, indeed they be punished, yet is their hope full of immortality;

Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy  
of himself.

As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself.

Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide with him in love:

Because grace and mercy are with his holy ones, and his care is with his elect.

### **4) Wisdom 4:7-15**

The just man, though he die early, shall be at rest.

For the age that is honorable comes not with the passing of time, nor can it be measured in terms  
of years.

Rather, understanding is the hoary crown for men, and an unsullied life, the attainment of old  
age.

He who pleased God was loved; he who lived among sinners was transported —

Snatched away, lest wickedness pervert his mind or deceit beguile his soul;

For the witchery of paltry things obscures what is right and the whirl of desire transforms the

innocent mind.

Having become perfect in a short while, he reached the fullness of a long career; for his soul was pleasing to the Lord, therefore he sped him out of the midst of wickedness.

But the people saw and did not understand, nor did they take this into account.

**5) Isaiah 25:6a, 7-9**

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples.

On this mountain he will destroy the veil that veils all peoples,

The web that is woven over all nations; he will destroy death forever.

The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces;

The reproach of his people he will remove from the whole earth; for the Lord has spoken. On that day it will be said:

“Behold our God, to whom we looked to save us! This is the Lord for whom we looked; let us rejoice and be glad that he has saved us!”

**6) Lamentations 3:17-26**

My soul is deprived of peace, I have forgotten what happiness is; I tell myself my future is lost, all that I hoped for from the Lord.

The thought of my homeless poverty is wormwood and gall;

Remembering it over and over leaves my soul downcast within me.

But I will call this to mind, as my reason to have hope:

The favors of the Lord are not exhausted, his mercies are not spent;

They are renewed each morning, so great is his faithfulness.

My portion is the Lord, says my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

Good is the Lord to one who waits for him, to the soul that seeks him;

It is good to hope in silence for the saving help of the Lord.

**7) Daniel 12:1-3**

In those days, I, Daniel, mourned and heard this word of the Lord:

At that time there shall arise Michael, the great prince, guardian of your people;

It shall be a time unsurpassed in distress since nations began until that time.

At that time your people shall escape, everyone who is found written in the book.

Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake;

Some shall live forever, others shall be an everlasting horror and disgrace. But the wise shall shine brightly like the splendor of the firmament,

And those who lead the many to justice shall be like the stars forever.

**SUGGESTED FIRST READINGS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT**  
**DURING THE SEASON OF EASTER**

**1a) Acts 10:34-43 LONG FORM**

Peter proceeded to speak, saying;

“In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him.

You know the word that he sent to the children of Israel as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power.

He went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the Devil, for God was with him.

We are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.

They put him to death by hanging him on a tree.

This man God raised on the third day and granted that he be visible, not to all the people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

**1b) Acts 10:34-36, 42-43 SHORT FORM**

Peter proceeded to speak, saying;

“In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly is acceptable to him.

You know the word that he sent to the children of Israel as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

He commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name.”

**2) Revelation 14:13**

I, John, heard a voice from heaven say, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from

now on.”

“Yes,” said the Spirit, “let them find rest from their labors, for their works accompany them.”

### **3) Revelations 20:11-21:1**

I, John, saw a large white throne and the one who was sitting on it. The earth and the sky fled from his presence and there was no place for them.

I saw the dead, the great and the lowly, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened.

Then another scroll was opened, the book of life.

The dead were judged according to their deeds, by what was written in the scrolls.

The sea gave up its dead; then Death and Hades gave up their dead.

All the dead were judged according to their deeds.

Then Death and Hades were thrown into the pool of fire. (This pool of fire is the second death.)

Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the pool of fire.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.

The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

### **4) Revelations 21:1-5a, 6b-7**

I, John, saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, God’s dwelling is with the human race.

He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them as their God.

He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away.”

The One who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

To the thirsty I will give a gift from the spring of life-giving water.

The victor will inherit these gifts, and I shall be his God, and he will be my son.”

## NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGES FOR THE SECOND READING

### **1) Romans 5:5-11**

Brothers and sisters:

Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

For Christ, while we were still helpless, died at the appointed time for the ungodly.

Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die.

But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

How much more then, since we are now justified by his Blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath.

Indeed, if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, once reconciled, will we be saved by his life.

Not only that, but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

### **2) Romans 5:17-21**

Brothers and sisters:

If, by the transgression of the one, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come to reign in life through the one Jesus Christ.

In conclusion, just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so, through one righteous act, acquittal and life came to all.

For just as through the disobedience of the one man so through the obedience of the one the many will be made righteous.

The law entered in so that transgression might increase but, where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more, so that, grace also might reign through justification for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **3a) Romans 6:3-9 LONG FORM**

Brothers and sisters:

Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.

For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection.

We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin.

For a dead person has been absolved from sin.

If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.

We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

### **3b) Romans 6:3-4, 8-9 SHORT FORM**

Brothers and Sisters,

Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.

If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.

We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

### **4) Romans 8:14-23**

Brothers and sisters:

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you received a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, "*Abba, Father!*"

The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us.

For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God.

We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

**5) Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39**

Brothers and sisters:

If God is for us, who can be against us?

He did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, will he not also give us everything else along with him?

Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones?

It is God who acquits us.

Who will condemn?

It is Christ Jesus who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

What will separate us from the love of Christ?

Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?

No, in all these things, we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us,

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**6) Romans 14:7-9, 10c-12**

Brothers and sisters:

No one lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself.

For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why then do you judge your brother?

Or you, why do you look down on your brother?

For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written:

*As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bend before me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.*

So then each of us shall give an accounting of himself to God.

**7a) I Corinthians 15:20-28 LONG FORM**

Brothers and sisters:

Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead came also through a man.

For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ; then comes the end, when he hands over the Kingdom to his God and Father.

For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

The last enemy to be destroyed is death, for *he subjected everything under his feet*.

But when it says that everything has been subjected, it is clear that it excludes the one who subjected everything to him.

When everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to the one who subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.

#### **7b) I Corinthians 15:20-23 SHORT FORM**

Brothers and sisters:

Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead came also through a man.

For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ.

#### **8) 1 Corinthians 15:51-57**

Brothers and sisters:

Behold, I tell you a mystery.

We shall not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet.

For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For that which is corruptible must clothe itself with incorruptibility, and that which is mortal must clothe itself with immortality.

And when this which is corruptible clothes itself with incorruptibility and this which is mortal clothes itself with immortality, then the word that is written shall come about:

*Death is swallowed up in victory.*

*Where, O death, is your victory?*

*Where, O death, is your sting?*

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**9) 2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1**

Brothers and sisters:

We know that the One who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence.

Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God.

Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.

For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal.

For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

**10) 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10**

Brothers and sisters:

We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

We are always courageous, although we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight.

Yet we are courageous, and we would rather leave the body and go home to the Lord.

Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or away.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense, according to what he did in the body, whether good or evil.

**11) Philippians 3:20-21**

Brothers and sisters:

Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified Body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.

**12) Thessalonians 4:13-18**

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope.

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those

who have fallen asleep.

Indeed, we tell you this, on the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will surely not precede those who have fallen asleep.

For the Lord himself, with a word of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

Thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, console one another with these words.

**13) Timothy 2:8-13**

Beloved:

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David: such is my Gospel, for which I am suffering, even to the point of chains, like a criminal.

But the word of God is not chained.

Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory.

This saying is trustworthy;

If we have died with him we shall also live with him;

If we persevere we shall also reign with him.

But if we deny him he will deny us.

If we are unfaithful he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself.

**14) I John 3:1-2**

Beloved:

See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God.

Yet so we are.

The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed.

We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

**15) I John 3:14-16**

Beloved:

We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers.

Whoever does not love remains in death.

Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him.

The way we came to know love was that he laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

### **PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL / GENERAL INTERCESSIONS**

*The Priest Celebrant will say the Opening Prayer.*

Reader: Please respond, "Lord, hear our prayer."

Reader: For N., who in Baptism was given the pledge of eternal life, that he/she may now be admitted to the company of the Saints. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

Reader: For our brother/sister, who ate the body of Christ, the Bread of Life, that he/she may be raised up on the last day. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

Reader: For our deceased relatives and friends and for all who have helped us, that they may have the reward of their goodness. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

Reader: For those who have fallen asleep in the hope of rising again, [*especially, N., N., other family members if you wish*] that they may see God face to face. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

**Reader:** For the family and friends of our brother/sister N., that they may be consoled in their grief by the Lord, who wept at the death of his friend Lazarus. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

Reader: For all of us assembled here to worship in faith, that we may be gathered together again in God's kingdom. We pray to the Lord. **R.**

*The Priest Celebrant will say the Closing Prayer.*

### **MUSIC SELECTIONS**

*The Parish's Director of Music will be more than happy to plan the hymn and Responsorial Psalm selections for you. However, if you have any particular hymns you'd like to request, please indicate them on the enclosed sheet. Hymns appropriate for the Funeral Liturgy are listed below; additional appropriate congregational hymns may be found in the **Missal**. All music selections and outside musicians must be approved by the Pastor or the Director of Music before any final plans are made. During the Lenten Season, hymns with "Alleluia" may not be used. **Please contact Dan Weckerly, Director of Music, for further assistance.***

#### **OPENING HYMN:**

Be Thou My Vision	O God Our Help in Ages Past	Amazing Grace	Prayer of St. Francis
The Strife is O'er	Keep in Mind	We Will Rise Again	Lord of All Hopefulness
Be Not Afraid	Sing to All the Saints in Glory		

**SUGGESTED RESPONSORIAL PSALMS SUNG BETWEEN READINGS**

*(Please select one of the following)*

- 1) Psalm 23:1-6 "The Lord is my Shepherd; there is nothing I shall want."
- 2) Psalm 25:6 & 7b, 17-18, 20-21 "To you, O Lord, I lift my soul."
- 3) Psalm 27:1, 4, 7 & 8b & 9a, 13-14 "The Lord is my light and my salvation."
- 4) Psalm 42:2, 3, 5c-f, 43:3-5 "My soul is thirsting for the living God: when shall I see him face to face?"
- 5) Psalm 63:2-6, 8-9 "My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God."
- 6) Psalm 103:8, 10, 13-18 "The Lord is kind and merciful"
- 7) Psalm 116:5,6, 10-11, 15-16ac "I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living."
- 8) Psalm 122:102, 4-9 "I rejoiced when I heard them say: let us go to the house of the Lord."
- 9) Psalm 130:1-8 "Out of the depths, I cry to you, Lord."
- 10) Psalm 143:1-2, 5-6, 7ab & 8ab, 10 "O Lord, hear my prayer."

**HYMN DURING THE PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS:**

Here I Am, Lord	You Are Mine	Eye Has Not Seen
Seek Ye First	The King of Love my Shepherd Is	I Heard the Voice of Jesus
O God, You Search Me	I Know That My Redeemer Lives	

**COMMUNION HYMN:**

Behold the Lamb	Panis Angelicus	The Supper of the Lord
Blest Are They	Gift of Finest Wheat	Our Blessing Cup ( <i>Hurd</i> )
O Sacrament Most Holy	Lord, Who at Thy First Eucharist	
	Adoro je Devote (God Here Hiding)	

**RECESSIONAL HYMN:**

Alleluia! Alleluia! Let the Holy Anthem Rise	Alleluia! Sing to Jesus
Crown Him with Many Crowns	For All the Saints
How Great Thou Art	I Am the Bread of Life
On Eagle's Wings	We Walk by Faith
Jerusalem, My Happy Home	Abide With Me
Love Divine, All Love Excelling	

**GUIDELINES FOR WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE**

**Eulogies are NEVER permitted within the Funeral Mass.** Eulogies are better presented and encouraged at the Vigil Service, at the Cemetery, or at the Funeral Luncheon.

Words of Remembrance are not required and they are not encouraged. If desired, they may be offered by one person only and before the Funeral Mass begins. These Words of Remembrance are not to be a Eulogy. **Words of Remembrance will be permitted only if the criteria below are met.**

If the family wishes to have someone present Words of Remembrance in Church, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- Please inform the Priest Celebrant if someone plans to offer Words of Remembrance. The Words of Remembrance must be written out and presented to the Priest Celebrant **one day prior** to the Funeral Liturgy for his approval.
- The person delivering the Words of Remembrance are to keep his/her remarks brief. They may extend for up to three minutes, but never take any longer. These Words are to be read from a written text, rather than be extemporaneous. These are read from the cantor's podium.
- The Words of Remembrance must focus on the deceased's belief in God and how his/her faith was lived out in this life. They should also express thanks to the gathered faithful for their presence at the Funeral Liturgy.
- *The Words must NOT be a history of the deceased person's life, or a testimonial about the speaker's relationship with the departed. The person delivering the Words should avoid anecdotal or other more "secular" content concerning the life of the deceased, which are better suited for a Eulogy.* The point of the Words of Remembrance is to speak of God's glory that shined through the departed, rather than recount a person's life story.