

My name is Carol Ouellette. I am one of five people from our parish involved in the Wake Service Ministry. In 2005, after a course of instruction conducted by Sister Barb Vaughn, I led my first parish prayer service at Sutton's Funeral Home. I was very nervous. Following a meeting involving family members of the person who had died, and after also meeting with Father Kelly, I started my preparation. I think it took me at least 4 or 5 hours to choose the readings and to write the Reflection/Homily. This was the toughest part - trying to personalize and connect the readings to the person for whom the prayers were being said. Several years and many prayer services later, the preparation time has shortened but the sense of the sanctity and importance of this service has greatly increased.

Losing a loved one to death, albeit it sudden or following a long illness, is a very difficult time in our lives. Not only do we have to try to handle all the emotions that are generated, but there are the many practical issues that require our attention. The Prayer/Wake service allows an opportunity to stop what we would normally be doing, reflect on the life of the person who has died, and share our support for the family and friends that have gathered at the funeral home. It is a holy time. I am grateful for my involvement in this ministry. I feel honored to be a voice for the parish at the Wake Service, to offer solace, support and a promise of continued prayers for the family. I believe this ministry contributes to the vitality of the parish, supports the mission statement, and is appreciated by our families. On behalf of the members of the Wake Ministry, we thank you for your continued encouragement and support, and ask for your prayers.