



Additional Frequently Asked Questions

What Acceptable Options Are Available?

- *Can I scatter or divide cremated remains?*
- *Can I combine cremated remains of multiple individuals together?*
- *Can I have cremated remains preserved in memorabilia such as jewelry or paper weights?*

Since the human body was the temple of the Holy Spirit during life, was fed at the Eucharistic table, and will share in the bodily Resurrection, contemporary cultural practices like scattering the cremated remains over water or from the air or keeping the cremated remains at home are not considered reverent forms of disposition that the Church requires.

Such practices can lead to your loved one's remains being lost in transition and possibly being treated disrespectfully by being "tossed out" as we unclutter our lives or clean out homes that belong to deceased friends and family.

GROUND BURIAL
Cremated remains can be buried in a small grave designated for such burials, or in some cases, added to an existing family grave or lot.

GRANITE NICHES
Niches are offered at many of our cemeteries which are small granite compartments, similar to crypts, but sized to contain an urn.

GLASS NICHES
Niches are also available in glass so that you may continue to appreciate the beauty of the urn you selected.

MAUSOLEUM
Similar to the addition of cremated remains to a family grave, they can be added to a family crypt in one of our mausoleums.

Each cemetery has different offerings which should be explored prior to making final arrangements.



It is our sincere desire to care for our parishioners and their families at every stage of this life and beyond. In keeping with that mission, our Catholic cemeteries provide holy, dignified resting places for our departed, while bringing comfort, serenity and inspiration to the families whose loved ones have been placed in our everlasting care. With 15 cemeteries conveniently located throughout southern New Jersey, South Jersey Catholic Cemeteries offers many options. Choosing a final resting place on consecrated grounds is your choice, your privilege and the right of every Catholic, as well as a confirmation of faith in our everlasting union with our Lord Jesus Christ.



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2016.11.30.003



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Answering Your Questions About the Catholic Church's Teaching on Cremation

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What Is The Church's Teaching Regarding Cremation?

The Church earnestly recommends the pious custom of burying the bodies of the dead be observed. It does not however, forbid cremation unless it has been chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching. The instruction *Ad resurgendum cum Cristo* (To Rise with Christ) released by the Vatican on October 25, 2016 provides clarification regarding burial and cremation.

Cremated remains are the body of the deceased in a changed form. We should honor them as we honor the body. They must be reverently buried or entombed in a place reserved for the burial of the dead.

The church prefers that cremation take place after the funeral liturgies. These celebrations include prayers at the time of death in the presence of the body, a Vigil Prayer during the time of the wake, and a Funeral Mass. Ideally, cremation occurs after the Funeral Mass and is followed by the Rite of Committal.

Why Must Cremated Remains Be Buried In Sacred Grounds?

As Catholics, we believe in the Resurrection, the promise that our body will rise from the grave and be reunited with the soul to become a renewed form of our creation. We are called to hold the deceased and their remains in prayerful and visible memory.

The Rite of Committal is the final act of the Christian community caring for the deceased. Just as we honor the corporeal remains by burying the body in a sacred place, we too must honor your loved one's cremated remains and lay them to rest in sacred grounds.

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. (1 Thess 4:16)

What Is The Accepted Practice For Handling Cremated Remains?

Cremated remains must be placed in an appropriate container. This container need not be an expensive urn. The plastic or cardboard container into which the crematorium places the cremated remains is sufficient for burial or placement in a niche in a cemetery.

The Church asks that your loved one's cremated remains be treated with the same respect that the corporeal remains are treated through:

- Full celebration of Catholic Funeral Rites
- Proper respect in the manner of carrying and placing cremated remains
- Burial or entombment in sacred grounds

Interring your loved one's remains in a Catholic cemetery ensures on going prayers and remembrance from the faith community. Holy Mass is offered many times throughout the year for their intentions.

Can I Have A Funeral Mass If I Choose To Be Cremated?

While it is still preferred for the body to be present for the Funeral Mass, in 1997 special permission was granted for the United States allowing each diocesan bishop to permit the celebration of Funeral Masses in the presence of cremated remains. The body is preferred because it was the body which felt the waters of Baptism, was marked with the oil of salvation and nourished by the Bread of Life.

Ideally, your loved one's cremated remains should be buried immediately following cremation and the funeral liturgies.

"The body forcefully brings to mind our belief that our human bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and destined for future glory at the resurrection of the dead. When the rites of the Order of Christian Funerals are fully celebrated they ritualize the journey from life through death to the fullness of God." (OCF 412)