



Cremation and the Catholic Church

Is Cremation Allowed?

Cremation is permitted by the Catholic Church. People are encouraged to celebrate the vigil and the Funeral Mass before cremation takes place. The Church recognizes, however, that there are times when it is not possible for financial reasons or other extraordinary circumstances for the body to be present for the celebration of the Funeral Mass. In such events a Memorial Mass may be celebrated in the absence of the body or in the presence of the cremated remains.

What should I do with the Cremated remains?

The cremated remains of the deceased must be given the same respect as a body is given in burial. The cremated remains should be placed in a worthy vessel and be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium. Some parishes within the Diocese of Venice have memorial gardens in which a loved one's cremated remains may be laid to rest. A minister of the Church should be present at the internment to celebrate the Rite of Committal.

The Catholic Church does not permit the practice of scattering ashes over the sea, on the ground, or from the air. This is considered to be an irreverent disposition of remains. The cremated remains may be buried at sea as long as they are placed in a worthy vessel that will carry the remains to the bottom of the sea bed. Burial of cremated remains at sea should observe the State law and its regulations.

