

# OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH

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Memorial Garden and  
Columbarium

## **THE MEMORIAL GARDEN AND COLUMBARIUM**

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**Q. What specifically is a columbarium?**

**A.** A columbarium is an arrangement of openings, either in a mausoleum, a room or wall, into which an urn or other worthy vessel is placed for permanent memorial. These openings are typically 8 inches square by 12 inches deep and are called “niches”. At Our Lady of Lourdes, the columbarium is a freestanding structure located outside the church containing about 100 niches.

**Q. If I choose to be cremated, what are the advantages of choosing the columbarium as opposed to a cemetery?**

**A.** This will be a personal choice.

Many people choose to be buried in a columbarium at their church because of a strong desire to be laid to rest on the grounds of a church that they loved and served. They like the simplicity of the ceremony and want to preserve a nearness to the church and perpetuate a relationship that has been a lifelong pursuit. Those that choose to be placed in a columbarium at the church like its religious focus and the nearness to the church. The proximity makes it convenient for visits by loved ones and for periods of meditation and reflection.

Also, the fee for being placed in one of the niches is usually considerably less than the cost of interment in a cemetery. Other factors that may enter into your decision are concerns about the environment, space available in a cemetery, and the flexibility cremation offers in ceremony planning and in the disposition of the remains.

At Our Lady of Lourdes perpetual care of the grounds surrounding the columbarium will be provided tastefully.

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**Q. Where is Our Lady of Lourdes Memorial Garden and Columbarium situated?**

**A.** Our Lady of Lourdes Memorial Garden and Columbarium will be on the church grounds adjoining Our Lady's Grotto. This location provides an exceptionally beautiful, private site for grieving, prayer, and meditation. Also, Christ in the Holy Eucharist is always nearby in the Perpetual Adoration Chapel to console those in their time of sorrow. The chapel may be used for prayer and reflection for the deceased and is a haven during inclement weather.

**Q. My spouse is not a Catholic and I want to be buried with my spouse. Are there any provisions whereby we can be placed in the same niche?**

**A.** Yes. Each niche holds two urns. Your non-Catholic spouse can have a funeral rite in Our Lady of Lourdes Church and then be placed in your columbarium niche. All funeral services, however, will be in keeping with Roman Catholic rites. Exceptions require approval by the Pastor.

**Q. My family members are buried in another city. Can I remember them at the site of Our Lady of Lourdes columbarium?**

**A.** Yes. A special tableau is provided in Our Lady of Lourdes Memorial Garden. It will contain memorial plaques for those loved ones who may be interred elsewhere. The plaques will be inscribed with their name and dates of their birth and death.

**Q. Who may be interred in Our Lady of Lourdes Columbarium?**

**A.** The columbarium is intended primarily for the use of the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. Therefore, active registered members of the parish may purchase niches.

However, with approval by the Columbarium Committee, the purchaser may inter family members who are not parishioners. However, this is limited to the spouse, parents, grandparents, siblings, children and grandchildren of the purchaser. The family members do not have to be Catholic.

**Q. May non-Parishioners be interred in Our Lady of Lourdes Columbarium?**

**A.** A limited number of niches will be available for purchase by active and registered Catholics from other parishes, and may be purchased with the agreement of the Columbarium Committee and approval of the Pastor. There is an increased charge for non-parishioners.

The purchaser may inter only family members, which is limited to the spouse, parents, grandparents, siblings, children and grandchildren of the purchaser. The family members do not have to be Catholic.

The Pastor must approve any exceptions.

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**Q. What is the cost of a niche?**

A. The price of niche in the columbarium is:

<u>Niche Contains:</u>	<u>Purchased by:</u>	
	<u>Parishioner</u>	<u>Non-Parishioner</u>
One person	\$1750	\$3500
Two persons	\$2200	\$4400

The price includes the niche, the urns, engraving on the niche's faceplate, opening and closing of the niche during internment, and perpetual care of the environs of the columbarium.

**Q. What is the cost of a Memorial Plaque?**

A. The price of memorial plaque is:

<u>Purchased by:</u>	
<u>Parishioner</u>	<u>Non-Parishioner</u>
\$300	\$500

**Q. Will these prices ever change?**

A. Yes and no. These prices are today's prices and may be raised at any time without notice. However, once you have purchased a niche or a Memorial Plaque, there will be no further charges, even if the prices should rise in the future.

**Q. I purchased a niche to accommodate one person. If I later decide to add another person, can I do so?**

A. Yes, assuming the second person meets the qualifications previously described. You will be charged the difference between the price you paid for the one-person niche and the price of the two-person niche that is current at the time you purchase it.

**Q. May more than two people be interred in a niche?**

A. No. There is not sufficient space within a niche for more than two urns.

**Q. May I supply my own urn?**

A. No. The urn will be provided for you and is included in the cost of the purchase of the niche. The urn will meet the standards of worthiness set down by the U.S. Bishop's Committee and will be appropriately sized to fit inside the niche. The Pastor must approve all exceptions.

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**Q. What happens if I purchase a niche in the columbarium, then move away?**

**A.** Upon receipt of your contract for the niche, it is the intent to provide a refund of your original purchase price, less incurred expenses, if any. However, the Columbarium Board will decide each case individually. Partial refunds for niches, such as the conversion from double to single niches, will not be provided.

**Q. May I decorate the area near my niche with flowers?**

**A.** The columbarium site will be perpetually maintained in a manner designed to be beautiful, serene, holy, and edifying. It is requested that you do not add additional floral arrangements, flags, statues, or other decorations.

**Q. How are niches assigned?**

**A.** You may choose a niche at the time of purchase from any location in the columbarium that has not already been purchased. If you choose not to select a location, the Columbarium Committee will select the niche location for you.

**Q. I am interested in purchasing a niche. What is the next step?**

**A.** You should contact the parish office. Alternatively, you may call the Columbarium Committee directly. Jim Shaughnessy, 919-212-162, is ready to assist you.

You may choose a niche location, and you will be provided with a legal contract defining your right to that niche. Your payment is required at the time of purchase.

Jim will also assist if you desire a Memorial Plaque.

## THE CHURCH AND CREMATION

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**Q. As a Catholic, may I be cremated?**

**A.** Yes. In May 1963, the Vatican's Holy Office (now the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith) lifted the prohibition forbidding Catholics to chose cremation. This permission was incorporated into the revised *Code of Canon Law* of 1983 as well as into the *Order of Christian Funerals*. It then became standard practice to celebrate the funeral liturgies with the body and then take the body to the crematorium. Most recently the bishops of the United States and the Holy See have authorized the celebration of a Catholic funeral liturgy with the cremated remains when the body is cremated before the funeral.

**Q. Do I need to ask permission to be cremated?**

**A.** No, but it is a good to discuss it with the Pastor.

**Q. Can I scatter the ashes? May I keep the ashes on my mantle?**

**A.** No. The practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air, or on the ground, or keeping cremated remains in the home of a relative or friend of the deceased are not the reverent disposition that the Church requires. Burial at sea of cremated remains differs from scattering. An appropriate and worthy container, heavy enough to be sent to its final resting place, may be dropped into the sea.

**Q. May anything be added to cremated remains such as cremated remains of other persons, pets, and other objects?**

**A.** No. The principle of respect for the cremated remains of a deceased Christian embraces the deeper belief in the individuality of each baptized person before God. Throughout history, the mingling of remains has never been an accepted practice, except in extraordinary circumstances.

**Q. When should cremation take place?**

**A.** The Church *strongly* prefers that cremation take place *after* the full funeral liturgy with the body. The presence of the body most clearly brings to mind the life and death of the person and better expresses the values that the Church affirms in its rites. However, in some circumstances it may not be possible to have the body present. In those situations, a full funeral liturgy may be conducted with the cremated remains present.

## **ABOUT CREMATION**

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**Q. Who decides if I am cremated?**

**A.** In most cases you make the decision to be cremated. However, your survivors may decide to have you cremated, generally due to special family circumstances ... but rarely against your will.

**Q. How do I make my wishes known?**

**A.** If you desire your body to be cremated you can make those wishes known in your will and in documents designed to help plan and prepare your funeral.

**Q. Must I honor my parent's or spouse's wish to cremate them?**

**A.** Out of respect for loved ones, you will want to do all you can to carry out the wishes of the deceased concerning funeral services provided they are in keeping with Church practice. Yet, you must always keep in mind the therapeutic value to the family of celebrating the full funeral liturgy with the body present. This may significantly outweigh your reasons for cremation before the funeral liturgy.

**Q. Is it necessary to embalm?**

**A.** When cremation follows the funeral liturgy, embalming is usually necessary. When cremation is to follow soon after death, embalming is not necessary. Each state has its own regulations in this matter, but generally the rule is that a deceased human body that is not buried or cremated within 24 hours is to be embalmed or refrigerated. However, simple embalming and the use of a cremation casket need not involve excessive costs.

**Q. Is it necessary to purchase a casket?**

**A.** No, it is not necessary to purchase a casket for cremation. The only thing required is a simple container in which the body can be transported and placed in the cremation chamber. If you choose to have the body present for Mass, with cremation to follow, rental is an option. Many funeral directors offer regular caskets for rent, as well as the special cremation or shell caskets that you may purchase.

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**Q. What is the proper container for cremated remains?**

- A. Appropriate, worthy containers, such as a classic urn, are proper for the cremated remains. At the present time, the U.S. Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy has determined only what is *not* a proper container. Although jewelry, dishes, statuary, and space capsules are examples of designer containers now being offered, they are *unacceptable* in Catholic funeral practices. It is also *unacceptable* to have cremated remains made into jewelry, dishes, and the like.

At Our Lady of Lourdes, an approved urn will be furnished. It is included within the purchase fee for a columbarium niche.

**Q. If I choose cremation, is it necessary to call a funeral home?**

- A. Yes and no. In North Carolina, a registered funeral director always performs the embalming of the body (if necessary) and the cremation. However, you are not required to have a viewing of the body at that funeral home.

**Q. Can a family member be present at the cremation?**

- A. Family members may choose to be present at the initiation of the cremation process. Also, the family can choose to receive the cremated remains at the crematory or some other designated place, such as the church.

**Q. How are cremated remains transported?**

- A. Transportation of cremated remains is a matter of personal choice. Individuals personally carrying a deceased person's ashes will often have the added responsibility of packing and transporting the urn. Using the principle of respect for the body, you may wrap the container of cremated remains with the possibility of sending it as accompanying baggage or take it along as carry-on luggage. Ask the airline office or the state's Department of Public Health for specific information about your region of travel before preparing the cremated remains for transport by air. Where no legal regulations exist regarding transport of cremated remains, most cremationists ship cremated remains in a standard shipping container by U.S. Mail, UPS or other common carriers.

**Q. Must cremated remains be buried/entombed?**

- A. Yes. Respectful final disposition of cremated remains involves interment or entombment. Burial options include a *family grave* in a cemetery marked with a traditional memorial stone or an *urn garden*, a special section in a cemetery with small, pre-dug graves for urns. Another choice is to be interred in a *columbarium*.

## FUNERAL RITES

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**Q. What funeral rites are celebrated when a person is cremated?**

**A.** The Church *strongly* prefers that the cremation take place *after* the full funeral liturgy with the body. However, when this is not possible, such as when the remains must be transported over a long distance, all the usual rites, which are celebrated with a body present, may also be celebrated in the presence of a cremated remains. In an appendix to the *Order of Christian Funerals*, the United States bishops have included prayers to be used when the cremated remains of a loved one are present in church.

The following rituals may be celebrated:

- Prayers After Death
- Gathering in the Presence of the Body
- Vigil for the Deceased
- Funeral Mass or Funeral Liturgy Outside Mass
- Rite of Committal

**Q. Should I schedule a funeral Mass before or after cremation?**

**A.** The Church strongly prefers cremations after the Funeral Mass. However, if it is not possible for the body to be present at the Funeral Mass, an indult has been granted by the Holy See which provides for the celebration of the Mass with the cremated remains in church.

**Q. Do I need permission to have cremated remains in church for the funeral liturgy?**

**A.** The indult granting the diocesan bishops of the United States authority to permit a funeral liturgy in the presence of cremated remains (in place of the body) requires two things. First, the diocesan bishop must authorize this practice for his diocese. For the Dioceses of Raleigh, the Bishop has already authorized it. Second, each individual case requires approval of the Pastor.

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- Q. What length of time is there between death, cremation, and the funeral Mass?**
- A.** The answer to this question depends on various factors, just as in the case of funerals with the body present. The place of death, the location of the crematory, scheduling a time for cremation, the schedule of the parish church, and other circumstances impact the timing. Once all arrangements have been made, you should generally allow at least one day between death and the celebration of the funeral liturgy.
- Q. What happens at the Funeral Mass with cremated remains?**
- A.** A journey, which began at baptism, comes to conclusion as we enter into eternal life. Significant attention should be given to the primary symbols of the Catholic funeral liturgy, as stated in the *Order of Christian Funerals* and its commentaries. The paschal candle and sprinkling with holy water are primary symbols of baptism and should be used during the funeral Mass. However, the pall is not used. Photos and other mementos may be used at the vigil, but are not appropriate for the Mass. During the Mass, the cremated remains should be treated with the same dignity and respect as the body. They are to be sealed in a worthy vessel. They may be carried in procession and/or placed on a table where the coffin normally would be with the Easter candle nearby.
- Q. How much time elapses from the Funeral Mass until the remains are interred in the columbarium?**
- A.** If the body is present at the Funeral Mass, the funeral director will advise you on the time necessary to cremate the body. Usually, it is a day or two. The interment then follows. If the cremated remains are present at the Funeral Mass, typically interment immediately follows the Mass.
- Q. Is a ritual conducted when the remains are interred in the columbarium?**
- A.** Yes. The Rite of Committal is very similar to the service conducted at a gravesite in a cemetery.
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