

Policy on Parish Columbaria

With the steady increase in the number of Catholics choosing the cremation of their human remains, some parish communities have been prompted to consider establishing a facility for the inurnment of cremated remains on parish property. Several factors support the present diocesan policy of not permitting parishes to build columbaria.

First, a legitimate concern arises that building a parish columbarium seemingly gives greater preference to the cremation of human remains, when, in fact, the Church prefers the burial of the body with full liturgical services. Second, the building and maintenance of a columbarium on parish property entails a commitment spanning many generations and centuries. This long-term obligation can tax the administrative and operational resources of the parish. Additionally, unforeseen events, such as the destruction or closure of the church or parish, would have negative consequences for the sacred trust undertaken by inurning cremated remains.

Therefore, it is the policy of the Diocese of Stockton that no parish will build a columbarium or any other facility for inurning human remains.

Bishop of Stockton

Chancellor

Given at the Chancery
of the Diocese of Stockton
on this 13 day of July, 2001.