

In-Ground Cremation Burial

Planning for a Cremation Burial at St. Michael Cemetery

Practical Information and Consideration of Options

**St. Michael Catholic Cemetery
3160 208th Street West
Farmington, MN**

(please note: this is not a mailing address)

Background

Cremation burial / inurnment is becoming ever-more prevalent at Catholic cemeteries. Catholic teaching is clear, however: cremated remains must be treated with the same reverence and respect that is accorded a body in a traditional burial.

This means that cremated remains may not be scattered, distributed among family, commingled, or treated in any other manner that detracts from the reverence that should be given to this former temple of the Holy Spirit.

About half of the committals at St. Michael Cemetery are cremation. A cremation burial / inurnment offers more options for the family and other loved ones of the deceased than a traditional full-body burial.

The intent of this booklet is to inform and guide as what to expect at the cemetery. It also allows several decisions to be thoughtfully considered and made in advance, so that the cemetery proceedings will occur in accordance with family desires, as well as meeting cemetery regulations.

Additional information regarding cremation for Catholics can be found in publications of The Catholic Cemeteries of our archdiocese, as well as other Catholic resources.

General Information

Cremated remains are to be contained in an appropriate and respectful closed vessel. Frequently this is a decorative urn but can also be the container supplied by the crematory. Maximum nominal dimensions for the containers are: 8" W x 12" L x 10" H

At St. Michael Cemetery, in-ground cremation burials require a concrete urn-sized vault. There are two reasons for this.

First, the vault protects the investment that many families have made in a decorative urn. It also allows for the potential exhumation of the cremated remains without damage to the urn, should any translocation be necessary in the future.

Secondly, it assists in keeping the soil above the burial from excessive settling.

Preparations at the Cemetery

A stand covered with a white linen cloth will be prepared for the vessel to rest upon during the committal rite. [If windy conditions exist, cemetery staff may decide to omit the cloth.] The cremation grave (ca. 2' x 2' x 2.5' in size) is temporarily covered with a board for safety. A second stand is available on request for holding flowers and pictures.

Normally 6 - 8 chairs are set up for the comfort of those who may want to sit during the committal rite. Do you wish to have more, or fewer, chairs available?

If so, please let us know the number requested: _____

After Conclusion of the Blessing / Prayers

The family of the deceased has a number of options as to how they wish to conduct the final 1) farewell and 2) repose for their loved one at the conclusion of the final blessing and/or prayers. No one option is "standard" and the family is encouraged to decide which choices would be most meaningful for them. Following are several possibilities to consider.

Farewell at Graveside

_____ WALK-BY and TOUCH

Mourners respectfully walk by the cremated remains of the deceased and offer a loving touch, either as the container sits on the stand or is held in the hands of someone.

Who would the family choose to hold the container or stabilize it on the stand: a family member or friend (their name, please), the funeral director, or cemetery staff (please indicate)?

_____ HOLD, then PASS

With respect and care, mourners pass the urn of the deceased from person-to-person to offer their farewell caress.

_____ MOVE DIRECTLY TO FINAL REPOSE

After the final blessing and/or prayers, several respectful moments are spent in reflection or additional prayer, after which final repose occurs.

_____ DISPERSE BEFORE FINAL REPOSE

Mourners disperse after final blessing and/or prayers, and cemetery staff inurns the cremated remains of the deceased and closes the niche after all have left the cemetery.

_____ OTHER FAREWELL REQUEST

The family may have another request for conducting their final farewell, as noted below (please also discuss with the funeral director or cemetery staff in advance to assure appropriateness and that family expectations are fully understood):

Final Repose

Mementos of an appropriate size and nature (e.g., cut flowers, letters, poems, pictures) are allowed to be placed *in* the vault, *upon* the closed vault, or *both*. Please make this desire known to the funeral director or cemetery staff in advance.

Frequently a family member or close friend of the deceased is identified who will place the cremated remains in the urn-vault or niche, and this is very appropriate. Several options exist:

The individual(s) would need to be able to kneel at graveside, on outdoor carpet and/or kneeling pad(s) provided by the cemetery for comfort. They would then gently lower the cremated remains a distance of about 24 inches. (The funeral director or cemetery staff always oversee or help with this step, as well as assisting in placing the cover on the vault.)

If this is the preference of the family, who would that person or persons be (their name(s), please)?

= OR =

Would the family prefer the funeral director a n d / o r cemetery staff perform the above facets of this burial option? _____ Yes

Would the family like to place a small symbolic
shovelful of soil on the closed urn-vault
(cemetery staff will provide implements and a
reserve of soil) _____ (Yes or No)

Questions / Concerns / Special Requests:

When this booklet is completed, please call one of the
following cemetery co-managers prior to the day of burial so
family wishes may be discussed:

- Conrad Adelman [651-696-6158 (cell); 651-463-2946 (home)]
- Dave Stanek [612-518-3633 (cell); 651-463-3162 (home)]