Catholic Cremation - A Sometimes Controversial and Misunderstood Subject



Catholic Cremation has long been a subject that is debatable. Many Catholic churches frown upon this practice, but it is allowed by some – with stipulations. The Bible has a scripture that states "ashes to ashes, dust to dust" which to many people means that humans came from ashes, and that is where they will return. The soul goes to Heaven, so the body really is just a vehicle for the soul, per se'.

According to Catholic belief, the soul leaves the body after death to be reunited at the end of time. The body is buried, which means it disintegrates over time. Cremation involves burning of the body in a furnace. The Catholics see the body as a holy temple, and therefore believe the burning of the body is a desecration of God's work. They also believed at one time that burning the remains stood for a denial in the belief of resurrection.

As the Catholic Church has evolved, cremation is now permitted. This religion continues to stress traditional burials and entombment, but is not as strict as it once was. For many people, it is an affordable option when no burial insurance is taken out and finances are short. It is a meaningful way to say goodbye to a loved one, and urns that are available are beautiful and made in so many ways that memorialize a loved one that is uniquely special to that person.

In earlier times, Catholic cremation was finally accepted, but only if the body were present at the Mass before being cremated. In present times, the Church allows cremation before the last Mass. The urn can be present, but must be approved by a bishop. The Church does have a few stipulations – the ashes must either be buried or put in an urn. Look at our burial urns. This religion does not look favorably upon scattering the ashes or keeping an urn in your home.

Catholic cremation is becoming more and more accepted, and people realize that traditional burials can be (and usually are) very expensive. There are several ways that cremation allows the family to save money. There is no casket required, and the use of a funeral home is often not necessary because there

is no wake prior to burial. However, the Catholic religion frowns upon immediate cremation as it does not give friends and family a chance to engage in the grieving process to their way of thinking.

Decades ago, the Vatican banned cremation, but in 1963 the ban was lifted, but the cremains could not be present at a funeral mass. This option could only be chosen if the deceased denied the teachings on the resurrection of the body. However, in 1997 the Vatican decided that the cremains can be present at mass and are to be treated with the same respect and reverence as in a casket burial. To this day, the scattering of ashes is still unacceptable.



Catholic Cremation Urn

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