

Q. What specifically is a Columbarium?

A. A Columbarium is an arrangement of openings into which an urn or urns contains the cremated remains of a deceased person is placed for permanent inurnment. At St. Mary Magdalene, each niche is designed for two urns. Therefore, only two people can be inurned in a niche.

Q. Where is St. Mary Magdalene Columbarium situated?

A. The Columbarium is located right next to the church. This location provides a private site for grieving, prayer, and meditation. The chapel may be used for prayer and reflection and is a haven during inclement weather. Care of the grounds surrounding the Columbarium will be tastefully, continually, and perpetually provided and is part of the niche price. The St. Mary Magdalene Columbarium is the property of the Roman Catholic Church, under the Bishop of Raleigh.

Q. As a Catholic, may I be cremated?

A. Yes. In May 1963, the Vatican's Holy Office (now known as the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith) lifted the prohibition forbidding Catholics to choose cremation. This permission was incorporated into the revised Code of Canon Law of 1983, and its liturgies were written in the Order of Christian Funerals. At that time, it was standard practice to celebrate the funeral liturgies with the body present and have the body cremated following the ceremony. More recently, however, the bishops of the United States and the Holy See have authorized the celebration of the Catholic funeral liturgy with just the cremated remains present. The family has the option of having the body present for a funeral Mass, followed by cremation and then The Rite of Committal a few days later, or the option of having the funeral Mass with the cremated remains present followed immediately by The Rite of Committal.

Q. When should cremation take place?

A. The Church prefers that cremation take place after a funeral liturgy with the body present. 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. The Bishop of the Diocese of Raleigh has authorized an indult granting authority to perform a funeral liturgy in the presence of cremated remains, and is now a customary practice. However, please inform the Pastor of your intentions prior to cremation.

Q. How much time elapses from the funeral Mass until the remains are inurned in the Columbarium?

A. If the body is present at the funeral Mass, the funeral director will advise you on the time necessary to do the cremation. Usually, it is a day or two. The inurnment then follows shortly thereafter. If the cremated remains of the body are present at the funeral we will walk together to the Columbarium directly after the funeral Mass.

Q. Must cremated remains be buried or inurned?

A. Yes. The cremated remains of the body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they came. The cremated remains should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or Columbarium. 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 considered reverent disposition by the Catholic Church.

Q. Who decides if I am to be cremated?

A. You make the decision to be cremated. It is advised that you communicate your decision to your immediate family. Reference:

<http://dioceseofraleigh.org/offices/human-life-and-dignity/pre-born-to-end-of-life>

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

A. No. The Pastor will need to be notified and the services will then be planned in accordance with family wishes.

Q. How do I make my wishes known?

A. You make your wishes known by informing the loved one who will be responsible for your funeral arrangements. If you pre-arrange your services, the chosen funeral home will have documents designed to help plan and prepare your funeral. It is not a good idea to only specify your funeral arrangements in your will and not inform your loved ones, as the will may not be read until some time after the funeral.

Q. Must I honor my parent or spouse's desire for cremation?

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.

Q. Who may be inurned at the St. Mary Magdalene Columbarium?

A. The Columbarium is intended primarily for the parishioners of St. Mary Magdalene Catholic Church. Therefore, any active registered member of the parish may reserve niches. The person making the reservation, however, may inter family members who may not be a parishioner, but this is limited to the spouse, parents, grandparents, siblings, children and grandchildren of the reserver. The family members do not have to be Catholic. The Pastor must approve any exceptions including non-parishioners.

Q. May anything be added to cremated remains such as cremated remains of other persons, pets, or 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 acceptable practice except in extraordinary circumstances.

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 may have a funeral rite at the Columbarium and then be placed in the same Columbarium niche. All inurnment liturgies, however, will be in keeping with Roman Catholic rites: exceptions require approval by the Pastor.

Q. What funeral rites are celebrated with a person who is cremated?

A. In the Order of Christian Funerals, the U.S. Bishops have included prayers that are used when the cremated remains are present in a 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. 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. During the funeral Mass, the cremated remains are treated with the same dignity and respect as a deceased body. The remains are sealed in an urn, which is carried in procession by pallbearers, (usually two) and set upon a table where the coffin would normally be placed.

Q. Is a ritual conducted when the remains are inurned in the Columbarium?

A. Yes. The Rite of Committal is very similar to the service conducted at the gravesite in a cemetery.

Q. What is the proper container for cremated remains?

A. The U.S. Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy has determined that urns must be simple and unadorned. Ostentatious urns and space capsules are examples of "designer" containers now being offered that are unacceptable in Catholic funeral practices. It is also unacceptable to have any parts of the cremated remains made into jewelry, dishes, art works etc. It is the family's responsibility to insure that the urn(s) purchased will fit into the niche provided. (Approximate niche size is 10.75" wide x 11.5" high x 12" deep) The urn is not part of the niche / contract cost. Arrangements for the urn can be made directly with the funeral home or, if you wish, St. Mary Magdalene has a single preferred urn for sale; for more information on the preferred urn model, please visit http://www.stmm.church/STMM_Urn_Guidelines.pdf. This will be in addition to the initial reservation price.

Q. If I chose to be cremated, what are the advantages of choosing the Columbarium as opposed to a cemetery?

A. This is a personal choice. Many people choose to be inurned in a Columbarium because of a desire to be laid to rest on the grounds of the church that they have loved and served. Proximity makes it convenient for visits and for periods of meditation and reflection by loved ones. Also, the cost of inurnment in a Columbarium is usually considerably less than the cost of burial at a cemetery.

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

A. Yes. In North Carolina, a registered funeral director always performs the cremation. It is not required to have a viewing of the body at the funeral home. Urns come in various sizes and shapes. Please spend time researching the cubic inches of the urn needed based on the body weight of the deceased. Approximate niche size is 10.75" wide x 11.5" high x 12" deep.

Q. Is it necessary to embalm?

A. While North Carolina does not require embalming, a funeral home may have recommended procedures that you will need to explore. Decision on viewing, delays in burial or transportation across state lines may require embalming. Refrigeration may be an alternate method for temporary preservation of the body. Please consult with your chosen funeral home.

Q. Is it necessary to reserve a casket?

A. No. The only thing required is a simple container in which the body can be transported and placed in the cremation chamber. The funeral home may have a casket rental option if the family decides there is a need.

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

A. Although not common, family members may choose to be present during cremation. Please consult with your chosen funeral home.

Q. How are the cremated remains transported?

A. The cremated remains will be placed inside the urn by the funeral home, and typically the funeral director will deliver the remains directly to St. Mary Magdalene at the time of the funeral Mass. Initial transportation of the remains to the funeral home is coordinated with the funeral director to assure all documentation and laws are complied with. An urn for the cremains is required for inurnment.

Q. How are niches assigned?

A. You may request a specific niche, and it will be assigned to you if it has not already been reserved. If you have no preference the Columbarium Committee will determine the niche assignment. The Church website has a link that allows you to order and assign the niche of your choice: <http://www.stmm.church/welcome/columbarium.cfm>.

Q. What is the price of a niche?

A. The Columbarium will be comprised of walls that are six niches high. Three different price points are determined by the location of the niche.

	<u>Parishioner</u>	<u>Non-Parishioner</u>
Top 2 Rows	\$3600	\$5700
Middle 2 Rows	\$4000	\$6500
Bottom 2 Rows	\$3300	\$5100

The price includes a niche suitable for two urns, all required engraving of the niche's faceplate, opening and closing of the niche during inurnment(s), and the perpetual care of the Columbarium. It does not include the cost of the urn(s), or any other associated funeral expenses. Your payment is required in full at the time of contract signing; payment is accepted by check, debit or credit card (Visa, Mastercard, and Discover only). If you have questions on your parishioner status please contact the Church office for clarification.

Q. Will these prices change?

A. These prices are today's prices and may be changed at any time without notice. However, once you have a paid reservation for a niche you will not be impacted by future price changes.

Q. Responsibility of costs beyond the niche?

A. The reservation fee does not include the cost of the urn(s), or any other associated funeral expenses.

Q. What proof will I have that I reserved a niche?

A. A contract will witness the Right of Inurnment with the payment of the appropriate fee for the specified niche. A copy of the contract will be held by you as well as kept on file at the church office. The family is responsible to advise the Church office of any changes in phone numbers, addresses, or changes made to those that will be placed in the niche. The use of the Columbarium does not constitute a sale of property, but is merely the provision of an inurnment. The St. Mary Magdalene Columbarium is the property of the Roman Catholic Church, under the Bishop of Raleigh.

Q. Where will records be maintained?

A. The initial contract and records of any changes to that contract as well as pertinent information of the deceased will be maintained and available at the church office.

Q. How are arrangements made for the engraving of the niche faceplate?

A. Inscriptions shall consist of names and dates of birth and death. They will be in a style approved by the Columbarium Committee and will be used in all niche inscriptions. The family will complete a document to assure accuracy of information provided to the engraver starting with the initial reservation process. The Columbarium committee will make all arrangements for the actual engraving. A blank faceplate will be affixed to the niche until the engraving is complete. Engraving is included in the reserve price for the niche. Engraving will be completed in a timely manner after inurnment. If a faceplate has to be replaced due to a change(s) made by the family, the family will be responsible for the cost of the new faceplate granite and any related engraving.

Q. What happens if I reserve a niche in the Columbarium, I later move away and I no longer have a need for the niche?

A. If the family no longer has a need for the niche, the family has two choices.

- 1) Contact the Church office and make arrangements to gift the niche back to St. Mary Magdalene.
- 2) Contact the Church office and make arrangements for a refund from the Church net of the original reservation price paid less any engraving costs that the Church may have incurred.

The niche cannot be transferred to any entity other than St. Mary Magdalene Church.

Q. What is the process / obligations for remains that have been inurned and the family desires to move the urn to another location?

A. Removal of an urn will only be allowed for a permanent move to another facility. Upon a written notarized request of a surviving member(s) of the deceased person's family a niche may be opened and the contents removed. St. Mary Magdalene will rely on the notarized document as showing evidence of authority and shall not be required to make further inquiry. Any opening of the niche will be done at a time convenient to St. Mary Magdalene and the family shall pay any expenses relating to the opening. (Including a new faceplate if needed) Any person requesting such opening and removal shall release St. Mary Magdalene from any liability in connection with such action and as a condition of precedent to such action, shall agree to indemnify and hold St. Mary Magdalene harmless from any costs (including legal fees and court costs) incurred in connection with such opening and removal. Both parties will sign a document reflecting the actions taken. All expenses related to this process will be paid before the niche is opened.

Q. My family members are buried in another city. Can I remember them at the site of the Columbarium?

A. St. Mary Magdalene does not have a memorial garden in conjunction with the Columbarium. The commemorative bricks on the current sidewalk by the school are intended to meet this need. Please contact the Church office if you desire to order a commemorative brick.

Q. May I decorate the area near my niche with flowers or other decorations?

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, insignias, or other decorations within / on or outside of the Columbarium niche area. If such items are left, no attempt can be made to return such items to the family when removed. Any extraordinary expenses to remove items will be at the expense of the family.

Q. What are the hours the Columbarium will be open for visitation?

A. The intent is for the Columbarium to be open 24 hours a day 7 days a week. This is subject to change if circumstances warrant.

Q. How do I make a contribution to the Columbarium?

A. On occasion, an individual or family may wish to provide additional contributions to the Columbarium for the purpose of furnishings such as seating, statuary, or the like. Individuals are encouraged to contact the church office and make their desire known. The Columbarium Committee then will work with the family and determine appropriateness of the contribution to the Columbarium as a whole. You may also contact the Columbarium committee directly through columbarium@stmm.net.

Q. Are there any special considerations?

A. The Columbarium Committee may set aside a number of Columbarium niches, which the pastor can provide at reduced cost. Please initiate communication with the Church office or columbarium@stmm.net if your situation requires such consideration. The Columbarium will also include a dedicated niche for children. Inurnment in this niche will be available at no cost. Each child will have an identified urn. The granite faceplate will not include individual names. The family can choose this option, or can certainly reserve their own 10.75" wide x 11.5" high x 12" deep niche. The Columbarium committee reserves the right to meet other special considerations on an as needed basis.

Q. Management of unforeseen catastrophic damages?

A. In the unlikely situation that there is a need to move the Columbarium to another site, all expenses of such a move to an equivalent facility will be at the expense of St. Mary Magdalene. St. Mary Magdalene will endeavor by all means possible to notify the family of the deceased of the required move as well as any relevant updates.

Q. I am interested in purchasing a niche. What is the next step(s)?

A. You can choose to reserve a niche in a way most comfortable for you. To reserve a niche you may visit or call the parish office at 919-657-4800. You may also go to <http://www.stmm.church/welcome/columbarium.cfm>. From this site you can pick, and communicate your niche selection. In turn, you will receive an email including your contract for signing, an attachment of the guidelines, and finally an attachment that gives you a visual of how the faceplate will be engraved. If you would like to communicate with a Columbarium Committee member, please email columbarium@stmm.net and a committee member will respond as quickly as possible.

Q. I would like to update my contact information. How do I do this?

A. Simply call the parish office at 919-657-4800 or send an email to the Columbarium Committee at columbarium@stmm.net and we will update your records.