

Our Lady of Guadalupe Church

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POLICY ON CREMATION

The Church's reverence for the sacredness of the human body grows out of a reverence and concern both natural and supernatural for the human person. The body of the deceased brings forcefully to mind the Church's conviction that the human body is in Christ a temple of the Holy Spirit and is destined for future glory at the resurrection of the dead. A further expression is the care traditionally taken to prepare the bodies of the deceased for a burial that befits their dignity, in expectation of their final resurrection in the Lord.

Although cremation is now permitted by the Church, it does not enjoy the same value as burial of the body. The Church clearly prefers and urges that the body of the deceased be present for the funeral rites, since the presence of the human body better expresses the values which the Church affirms in those rites.

The cremated remains of a body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come. This includes the use of a worthy vessel to contain the ashes, the manner in which they are carried, the care and attention to appropriate placement and transport; and the final disposition. The cremated remains should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum. Whenever possible, appropriate means for recording with dignity the memory of the deceased should be adopted, such as a plaque or stone which records the name of the deceased. **The ashes are not to be scattered or kept at home.**

This faith is expressed by the following options for funeral rites at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church:

1. Mass with the body present, followed immediately by burial or entombment of the body.
2. Mass with the body present, followed by cremation, and entombment or burial of the ashes at a later date.
3. Cremation and Mass with the ashes present, followed immediately by entombment or burial.