
DIOCESE OF RICHMOND
GUIDELINES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE ORDER OF CHRISTIAN FUNERALS
IN THE PRESENCE OF CREMATED REMAINS

1. It is the policy of the Diocese of Richmond to permit the funeral liturgy to be celebrated in the presence of the cremated remains as permitted by the indult received by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops from the Congregation for Divine Worship (Prot.1589/96/L) dated July 30, 1997. Pastors and pastoral ministers are guided in the celebration of the Funeral Liturgy by Appendix 2 for The Order of Christian Funerals as approved for use in the United States.
2. The faithful have the right to the implementation of this indult. Pastors and all pastoral ministers are to respect all requests by the faithful to celebrate the Funeral Liturgy in the presence of the cremated remains.
3. In the Funeral Mass and other Rites in the presence of the cremated remains, the prayers which reflect the honoring or burying of the body should not to be chosen or should be modified as necessary. (cf. Appendix 2: #428) The prayerful description chosen in the liturgical text to describe the cremated remains in the prayer forms is “earthly remains.” The cremated remains of a body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come. (#417)
4. The ritual (#427) indicates that the cremated remains are to be placed on a suitable table or stand at the place normally occupied by the coffin near the paschal candle. The placing of the pall over the created remains is omitted, but sprinkling with holy water and honoring the cremated remains with incense is prescribed. (cf. #433-435, #428)
5. The faith of the Church calls us to hold the deceased and their remains in prayerful and visible memory. 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 the reverent disposition that the Church requires. 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.¹ (#417).

DIOCESE OF RICHMOND – OFFICE OF WORSHIP
CREMATION & FUNERAL LITURGY
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¹ — REFLECTIONS ON THE BODY, CREMATION AND CATHOLIC FUNERAL RITES (A Statement by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops of the United States, 1997, paragraph 417)