## Norms for the Use of

## Cremation in Roman Catholic Funerals

Unless special circumstances prevent it, all baptized Roman Catholics and the spouses thereof may be afforded the rites of the Church. The Eucharist is not always the best rite to be used in every circumstance. Sometimes a service in the funeral home or at the gravesite is appropriate. This is to be determined by Monsignor and the family. Please note that the parish and the pastor are to be notified PRIOR to any funeral arrangements being made. This will save much confusion! If Mass is celebrated the preference for time is always in the evening with burial following the next day.

(The Funeral Norms note that this allows for the greatest numbers of people to gather for the most important rite, and allows the parish to have available the largest number of ministers to assist in its celebration).

Body burial is still the normative form of burial for Catholics. Cremation may be used for good and substantial reasons.

1.) We ask that the body be present at a funeral Mass. This allows for the blessing of the body and the final renewal of the Baptism rites. (Funeral homes have viewing caskets available for this purpose, whether or not the body itself will be publically viewed) Actual cremation follows the service. This is always the preference of our Parish.

2.) Cremated remains must be interred**,** as the Catholic Church requires. This is not optional for us. Think of “cremains” as a body. They are to be treated as such and with appropriate dignity. They must be interred in the ground, in a columbarium niche, or if at sea, as one unit. It is neither permitted nor respectful to our faith to scatter cremains or to retain them in the netherworld of personal possession.

Internment is expected to take place within a reasonable time after cremation. Failure to do so may result in the inability of the parish to offer Catholic rites.