

ST. FRANCIS BY THE SEA COLUMBARIUM

The St. Francis by the Sea Columbarium is constructed in a beautiful garden setting between the church and the lagoon and provides a reverent place of inurnment for the ashes of our beloved deceased. In a way, it re-created the “church-yard cemetery” tradition of earlier America, as it reposes the ashes in a setting close to familiar surroundings.

To the living it provides a garden spot for visitation, remembrance and prayer for the deceased.

Since it represents a departure from established and traditional interment practices, many parishioners have asked questions about this facility, its purpose, and arrangements for its use. We have attempted to provide answers to the most frequently asked questions.

Q: At one time, didn't the Catholic Church forbid cremation?

A: The Church once prohibited Cremation, but current regulations provide for it as an option to traditional earth or crypt interment. You will note that cremation is in harmony with the Church's often-repeated reminder that “dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.”

Q: Physically, how is a columbarium constructed?

A: The niches are located in a low brick wall, each covered with a simple bronze marker that notes the name, years of birth and death of the deceased. Each niche provides a weatherproof box for the urn, which serves as a repository for the ashes.

Q: How many niches will there be?

A: Plans call for an eventual provision of 2112 niches.

Q: How are the ashes placed in the columbarium?

A: An urn of specified size is provided to the funeral home in connection with the cremation procedure. After the funeral rite, this urn is placed in the niche of your selection. It is placed in an upright position in a weatherproof box. The imprinted marker will be placed on the niche and sealed.

Q: How do I select a niche(s)?

A: The columbarium is built in phases as paid subscriptions are received. You may make your selections from the columbarium units already constructed or in construction. Contact the parish office to reserve a niche or niches.

Q: May anyone purchase a niche at St. Francis?

A: Because of space limitations and a desire to provide space to parishioners, those desiring niches must be past or present registered members of St. Francis, Holy Family, or St. Gregory, for at least four months, any exceptions must be discussed with the pastor. Niches may also be obtained for certain other eligible persons, namely members of a parishioner's immediate family.

Q: Is there a formal funeral for columbarium inurnment?

A: The Church's preference is that the body be present at the vigil, which can be held at the church or the funeral home, and at the funeral Mass. After the Mass, the remains are returned to the funeral home for cremation and the inurnment is done within the next few days. The funeral home director can inform you of the options available.

Q: What is the cost of the columbarium niche?

A: Since the price of the bronze markers change, please contact the parish office for information.