



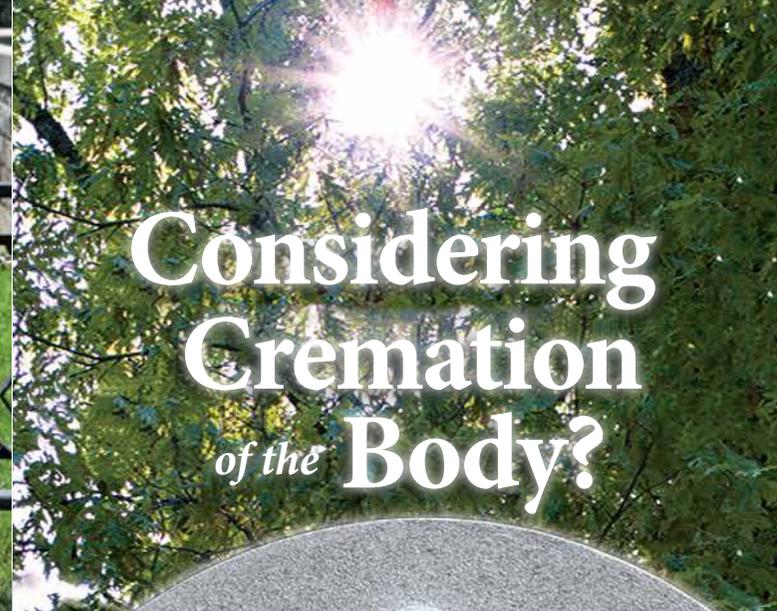
# Consider the Glorified Future of the Body!

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# Considering Cremation of the Body?



Witnessed by simple men and women, the Resurrection of Jesus answers the deepest hope in the human heart that we will not be extinguished after death, that there is a glorified future for our deceased bodies, as well as our living souls.

All the Church's teachings on death and burial spring from this foundational belief about the body's eternal destiny in Christ.

The life of the Church proposes that since every body has a future, every body deserves a resting place in anticipation of that future.

The Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Washington exist for this purpose: to be a prayerful place memorializing the existence of those who now await the resurrection of their bodies in Christ.

## Or visit our cemeteries:

### All Souls Cemetery

11401 Brink Road  
Germantown, MD 20876  
301-428-1995

### Gate of Heaven Cemetery

13801 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20906  
301-871-6500

### Mt. Olivet Cemetery

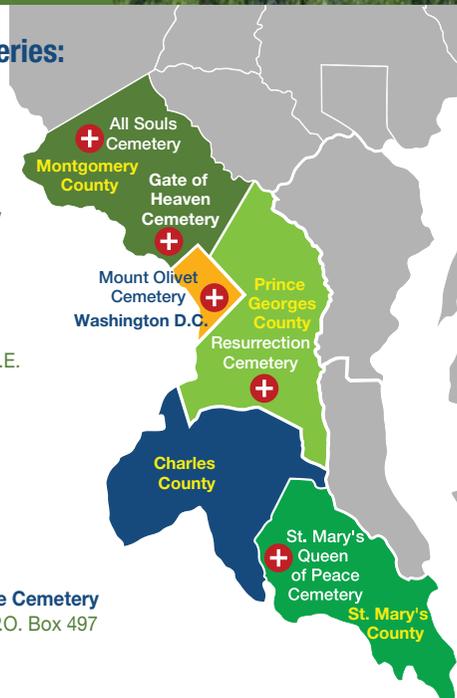
1300 Bladensburg Road, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
202-399-3000

### Resurrection Cemetery

P.O. Box 151  
8000 Woodyard Road  
Clinton, MD 20735  
301-868-5141

### St. Mary's Queen of Peace Cemetery

38888 Dr. Johnson Road, P.O. Box 497  
Mechanicsville, MD 20659  
301-475-5005  
301-932-1766

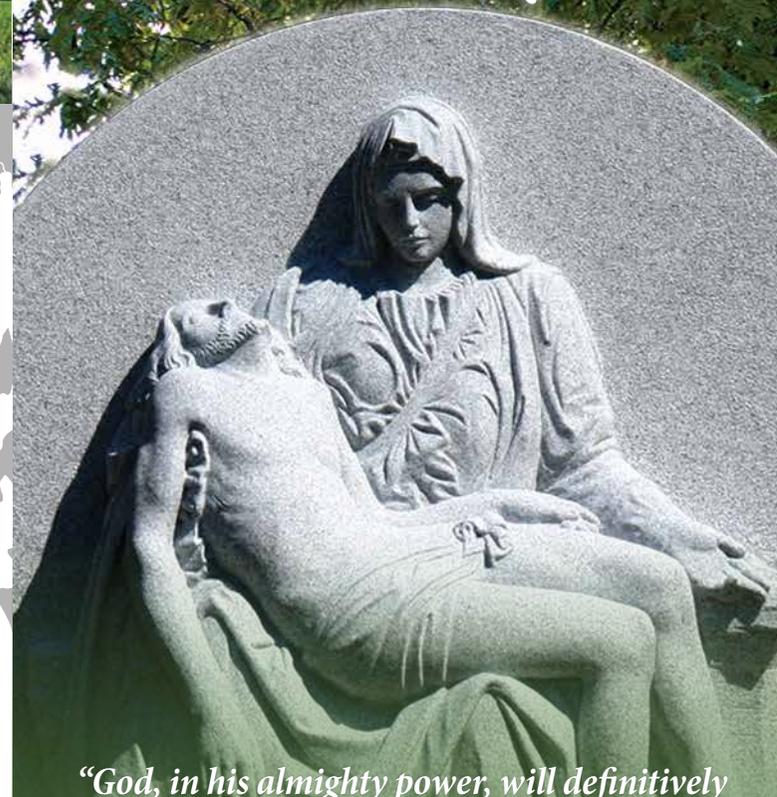


### Cemetery Office Hours

Monday through Saturday  
8:00am to 4:00pm

### Cemetery Grounds Visiting Hours

March 16 to November 2  
7:30am to 7:00pm  
November 3 to March 15  
7:30am to 5:00pm



*“God, in his almighty power, will definitively grant incorruptible life to our bodies by reuniting them with our souls, through the power of Jesus’ Resurrection.”*

— Catechism of the Catholic Church, 997

The Catholic Cemeteries of the  
Archdiocese of Washington, Inc.  
13801 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20906

The Catholic Cemeteries of the  
Archdiocese of Washington, Inc.

“It is lovely to think that it will be Jesus himself to awaken us.”

— Pope Francis



### What does the Church say about the cremated body?

Since 1963, the Church allows for cremation of the body, providing that those who make that decision recognize that the deceased body is not lost forever but is destined for resurrection.

Cremation quickly reduces the body into a form where the person can no longer be recognized. This can make it more difficult for family and friends to remember and hope in the person's eternal future, body and soul. For this reason, the Church acknowledges that “cremation does not hold the same value” as the traditional way of full body burial in the manner of Christ (*Order of Christian Funerals, Reflections, p. 14*).

### What are the Church's funeral rites when the body is to be cremated?



The Church prefers and urges that the full body be present for the funeral rites (*OCF, 414*), since their loved ones' experience of that person has always been through the human body. “The body that lies in death recalls the personal story of faith, the past relationships, and the continued spiritual presence of the deceased person” (*OCF, Reflections, p. 11*).

The Church's Vigil, Funeral and Committal rites are Christ's

gift to help bereaved families on their journey over several days through mourning, prayer, consolation and separation, in the company of friends and neighbors.

Some families may make the decision to cremate the body immediately after death thinking it will move this painful journey along more quickly. In fact, grief counselors report it is easier for family and friends to confront the mystery of death with a visual experience of the deceased person who can still be recognized in love.

If the body is to be cremated after the Church's Vigil and Funeral rites, funeral directors can provide for a simple embalming and a regular casket for rent. Purchase of a special shell or cremation casket is usually available for this same purpose.



### Why does the Church insist upon burial of the cremated body?

However, if cremation must take place immediately after death prior to celebrating the sacred funeral and burial rites, the Archdiocese of Washington allows for the cremated remains of the body to be present in the church during the Vigil and Funeral Mass of Christian Burial.

In view of the Resurrection of the Body, the Church teaches that all reverence given to a full body in a casket should naturally be extended to the cremated body. Therefore, cremated bodily remains are not to be scattered, kept at home or divided into other vessels among family members. After



the cremation process, the bodily remains should be placed in a respectful vessel and reverently buried or entombed in the sacred ground of a cemetery or mausoleum immediately after the funeral (*OCF, Reflections, p. 15*).

The Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Washington has ground burial sections for cremated bodies and mausoleum niches for entombment, depending on the family's wishes. The CCAW also warmly welcomes families who have kept cremated bodily remains in their homes, and are now interested in burial in the sacred ground of a cemetery.

### Does belief in the Resurrection test your faith?

Faith in the resurrection of the body is a gift. If you find that your faith is tested in the face of conversations about death and burial, know that you are not alone in your doubts about this great mystery of human life.

“I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. *Do you believe this?*” (*Jn 11:25-26*).

Jesus' question to Martha, distraught over the death of her brother Lazarus, is posed to every person in every age!

In the face of a family death, Martha sought the wisdom, consolation and presence of Jesus. In making decisions about cremation of the body, talk with a priest and parishioners who understand the Catholic Way of Death and Burial in your local community.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit, God's only begotten Son has come to dwell among us in the life of the Church. You are always welcome to draw near!