

CATHOLICISM

In May, 1963, the Vatican's Holy Office (now the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) lifted the prohibition forbidding Catholics to choose cremation. It then became standard practice to celebrate the funeral liturgies with the body present after which it would be taken to the crematorium.

Most recently (in a pastoral response on the part of the Church to the growing phenomenon of Catholic faithful opting for cremation), bishops of the United States and Holy See have authorized the Celebration of a Catholic funeral liturgy with the cremated body when the body is cremated before the funeral (Order of Christian Funerals in the Catholic Church). Guidelines for choosing a final resting place for the cremated body have also been adopted. In 2017 the Vatican re-affirmed its belief that cremated remains be buried in cemeteries or entombed in mausoleums.

BUDDHISM

The Buddha's body was cremated and this set the example for most followers, even in the West. Therefore, cremation is usually chosen by Buddhist.

HINDUISM

Hindus traditionally cremate their dead for swifter, more complete release of the soul. Burial, which preserves the bond, is generally forbidden. The body remains in the home until taken to the place of cremation, which is usually 24 hours after death.

PROTESTANTISM

Cremation is accepted by most Protestant denominations; however since each denomination has its own beliefs, what is acceptable and normal in one may not be so in another. Guidelines as to practices in your particular Protestant denomination can be obtained from your local clergy.

Dr. Billy Graham, renowned Christian theologian, writes in his website, "...the body is destined for resurrection, transformation, and reunion with the spirit at Christ's return. Whether burial or cremation best expresses the appropriate respect is a very personal decision. The wishes of other close family members and friends should be considered in any decision because they are the ones who will live with the decision and the memories. At the resurrection, it will not make any difference whether a person's body has been buried or cremated. God knows how to raise the body, either in the resurrection of life or the resurrection of condemnation. The new body if a Christian will be radically changes and glorified body like the body of the exalted Christ..." For more thoughts from Dr. Graham, visit his website at www.billygraham.org.

OTHERS

According to the Funeral Consumer's Last Rights, by the editors of Consumer Reports, most American Protestant denominations - including the Society of Friends (Quakers), Christian Science, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Jehovah's Witness - permit cremation.

JUDAISM

Emotional difficulty with cremation after the Holocaust and an emphasis on the natural process of the body returning to the earth are two reasons why cremation is not typically an accepted Jewish practice. However, while Orthodox and Conservative Judaism are opposed, Reform Judaism accepts cremation.

There may be some variation in funeral rites and customs when cremation has been chosen. Check with your local rabbi or synagogue for guidance.

ISLAM

Islamic religious law allows for no change in the body after death. According to Muslim belief, souls return to the body after judgement to experience salvation or eternal damnation. This attitude toward dead bodies finds cremation abhorrent and it is almost never allowed.

NATIVE AMERICANS

Burial customs among Native Americans are numerous. Cremation is observed in many west coast tribes.

SOURCES

Information for this brochure was gathered from the following web sites and sources. While every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of the information, we encourage you to contact your local clergy for further guidelines and the most up-to-date data.

www.cremation.com
www.billygraham.org
www.creativecremains.com
www.hinduism-today.com
www.explainplease.com/cremation