

Columbarium Policy and Pricing

St. Joseph Cemetery

Westphalia, MO

last updated October, 2026

St. Joseph's columbarium niches are 12" x 12" x 16".

To reserve a niche in the columbarium, please contact the parish office.

I. Columbarium Pricing

1. Only parishioners of St. Joseph or immediate relatives may purchase columbarium niches.
2. The price of a niche is the same as the price of a burial plot in St. Joseph Cemetery plus a \$150 engraving fee.

Thus, for example, if a parishioner would pay \$100 for a burial plot, that same parishioner would pay \$250 for a columbarium niche.

3. There are no additional fees to inter a second urn in a niche that has already been paid for or to add engraving to the face plate.
4. As with burial plots, columbarium niches are sold/reserved on a first-come/first-served basis.

II. Engraving Policy

1. Columbarium niches are close to one another, so the parish desires to maintain simplicity and uniformity out of respect for all those interred in the columbarium. Thus, engraving on face plates may include only:

a. Name of the deceased (no nicknames except common and generally recognized short forms of names: e.g., "Bill" for "William" or "Jim" for "James")

b. Date of birth

c. Date of death

d. Date of marriage, ordination, or religious profession

2. No quotations or images are allowed. Font choice and size are at the discretion of the parish in order to maintain uniformity.
3. A small (no more than 3x3-inch) military emblem is allowed on the face plates of veterans.
4. The parish arranges for the engraving of the face plate.

III. Other Regulations

1. Each niche may hold up to two appropriately sized urns.
2. The pastor may make any warranted exceptions to this policy in special cases.

Appendix: Excerpts from Church Documents on Cremation

“The Church earnestly recommends that the pious custom of burial be retained; but it does not forbid cremation, unless this is chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching.”
(*Code of Canon Law*, can. 1176.3)

“The body of a deceased Catholic Christian is also the body once washed in baptism, anointed with the oil of salvation, and fed with the Bread of Life. Thus, the Church’s reverence for the sacredness of the human body grows out of a reverence and concern both natural and supernatural for the human person. The body of the deceased brings forcefully to mind the Church’s conviction that the human body is in Christ a temple of the Holy Spirit and is destined for future glory at the resurrection of the dead. This conviction in faith finds its expression in a sustained and insistent prayer that commends the deceased person to God’s merciful care so that his or her place in the communion of the just may be assured. A further expression is the care traditionally taken to prepare the bodies of the deceased for a burial that befits their dignity, in expectation of their final resurrection in the Lord.” (*Order of Christian Funerals, Appendix on Cremation*, no. 412)

“By burying the bodies of the faithful, the Church confirms her faith in the resurrection of the body, and intends to show the great dignity of the human body as an integral part of the human person whose body forms part of their identity. She cannot, therefore, condone attitudes or permit rites that involve erroneous ideas about death, such as considering death as the definitive annihilation of the person, or the moment of fusion with Mother Nature or the universe, or as a stage in the cycle of regeneration, or as the definitive liberation from the ‘prison’ of the body.”
(Instruction *Ad resurgendum*, no. 3)

“Although cremation is now permitted by the Church, it does not enjoy the same value as burial of the body. The Church clearly prefers and urges that the body of the deceased be present for the funeral rites, since the presence of the human body better expresses the values which the Church affirms in those rites.” (*Order of Christian Funerals, Appendix on Cremation*, no. 413)

“The cremated remains of a body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come. This includes the use of a worthy vessel to contain the ashes, the manner in which they are carried, and the care and attention to appropriate placement and transport, and the final disposition. 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 on the home of a relative or friend of the deceased are not the reverent disposition that the Church requires.” (*Order of Christian Funerals, Appendix on Cremation*, no. 417)

“When the choice has been made to cremate a body, it is recommended that the cremation take place after the Funeral Liturgy.” (*Order of Christian Funerals, Appendix on Cremation*, no. 418)

“The conservation of the ashes of the departed in a domestic residence is not permitted.” (Instruction *Ad resurgendum*, no. 6)

“In order that every appearance of pantheism, naturalism or nihilism be avoided, it is not permitted to scatter the ashes of the faithful departed in the air, on land, at sea or in some other way, nor may they be preserved in mementos, pieces of jewelry or other objects. These courses of action cannot be legitimized by an appeal to the sanitary, social, or economic motives that may have occasioned the choice of cremation.” (Instruction *Ad resurgendum*, no. 7)

“When the deceased notoriously has requested cremation and the scattering of their ashes for reasons contrary to the Christian faith, a Christian funeral must be denied to that person according to the norms of the law.” (Instruction *Ad resurgendum*, no. 8)