



## ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

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### Office for Divine Worship

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Priests and Deacons of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia  
**From:** Reverend Gerald Dennis Gill, Director  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016  
**Subject:** Conservation of Ashes in the Case of Cremation

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Bishops, Priests and Deacons:

Cardinal Müller, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, issued the Instruction *Ad resurgendum cum Christo*, regarding the proper burial of the deceased Christian and the conservation of the ashes in the case of cremation, this past October 25, 2016. Our current archdiocesan guidelines, *Norms Regarding Cremation in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia*, published on September 6, 2013, accord with the Vatican Instruction. The Instruction provides a concise presentation of the faith of the Church with regard to the resurrection of the body and the reverence that accompanies the burial of a Christian. The preference for the burial of the body is reiterated. Yet, the increased use of cremation requires explicit norms. Namely, the ashes are to be interred and not maintained in a domestic residence, are not to be divided up in any way, and are not to be scattered.

The recent Vatican guidelines and the archdiocesan guidelines can be found on the website of the Office for Divine Worship: <http://www.odwphiladelphia.org/sacred-liturgy/archdiocesan-guidelines/>. An audio explanation of the Vatican guidelines can be found at: <http://philadelphia.cbslocal.com/2016/10/25/vatican-issues-new-guidelines-on-cremation-says-no-to-scattering-ashes/>.

Please share this information with those who assist you with Funeral preparations and with the Funeral Directors in your parish.

Thank you and God bless,  
Father Dennis Gill