

On Death XXIV

After Cremation, it should properly be entombment of the remains - PERIOD.

Recently we have become aware of another custom, which is forbidden; some have taken the ashes and made jewelry out of them. I'm not kidding or making this up. But what happens when we grow tired of wearing a cross of ashes around our neck? And of course taking Grandma home to the mantle has become an enormous problem in recent years; when Grandma comes home she has the place of honor, but pretty soon, she is placed in a closet, and then the family moves and the ashes are left in the basement. Whose they are, no one knows or remembers. There are literally thousands of urns of unknown ashes that have recently been placed at the Catholic cemeteries in unmarked graves because someone insisted on taking them home, and then forgot about them. This is no way to honor the dead. It is also verging on the sick to want to keep the remains of your loved one nearby, as if they were still there. Grief demands that we let go of our beloved dead not hold them until they fester. This is a practice that calls for clear understanding of our faith; we honor the dead by praying for them to God; we do not worship the dead body or the ashes. They are best placed in the appropriate cemetery and from then on one can visit or at least know that your beloved dead has been cared for.

IHM Pray for us.

Fr. Jerry