

Columbarium Survey

A Columbarium is a place to inter the cremated ashes of individuals, much like a burial plot is used to inter non-cremated remains. Why have a columbarium at church? Historically Christians have laid the dead to rest in churches where they are remembered and their remains are safeguarded. Burial within the church itself, or in an adjacent churchyard was once a common practice. You can still see many older churches with cemeteries on the property of the church in the Baltimore area. The amount of land necessary for a burial ground is no longer available to most churches, and a myriad of laws and regulations make it extremely difficult to establish a burial site.

Many people today are turning to cremation as an economical, dignified way to address the rising cost of funerals. In recent years, cremation with internment at a church site is becoming common. In this way, the remains of the deceased can remain at the church that played such an important part in their lives. The cost of traditional funerals, which continues to rise, is one reason many people are choosing cremation as an alternative. Additionally, many people are choosing to be more environmentally conscious and moving toward more simple funeral/burial options. Creating a columbarium at our church creates an opportunity for those who have given so much to the church to be interred here as a sign and symbol of their dedication for generations to come.

Based on recent experiences of members of the congregation, a typical funeral costs about \$15,000. Prices can vary greatly depending on the options selected; these prices are intended for comparison only.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Cost – Traditional</i>	<i>Cost – Columbarium</i>
Traditional Package – funeral director, embalming, viewing, transport, etc.	\$12,500	<i>\$12,500 – varies depending on family preferences</i>
Casket	<i>\$3,000-13,500</i>	<i>\$100-300</i>
Burial Vault (required by most cemeteries)	\$2,000	Not required
Burial Plot	\$2,000	Not Required
Headstone	\$1,500	Included
Cremation Service	n/a	\$800

We would like to determine the level of interest in creating a Columbarium at St. Vincent's. There are still many questions to be answered and options to be evaluated, but we would like to understand the level of interest within the community to see if that effort is worthwhile. In our archdiocese, a church is not permitted to have a columbarium unless it has a cemetery in which it would be located. If there is enough interest in the parish, we would have to request that the archdiocese make an exception. If not enough parishioners are interested, we will not pursue this further.

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Very Interested</i>	<i>Somewhat Interested</i>	<i>Not at All Interested</i>
I would be interested in purchasing Columbarium space at St. Vincent			

<i>Features – Please rate how important the following features would influence your decision to purchase a space</i>	<i>Encourage purchase</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Discourage purchase</i>
Outside, park-like setting			
Access to visit the space outside of normal business hours			
Access to visit the space somewhat restricted (during church hours, required key card for access, etc.)			

What other features would you like to see? _____

<i>Cost</i>	<i>Very Interested</i>	<i>Somewhat Interested</i>	<i>Not at All Interested</i>
If the cost of Columbarium space per Individual including granite marker was \$1,000			
If the cost of Columbarium space per Individual including granite marker was \$2,000			
If the cost of Columbarium space per Individual including granite marker was \$3,000			

Name (optional) _____ email _____