

**WHAT TO DO WITH THE ASHES OF A DECEASED PERSON?** ---The conservation of the ashes of a deceased person has resulted in much questioning among the faithful. If we wish to die with dignity, it would doubtlessly be desirable to rest in dignity after death. The Catholic Church, out of principle, has always disapproved of the many practices which have evolved. They are disrespectful towards the ashes, since ashes are human remains in the same way as bodies. Nonetheless, the way of disposing of a deceased person's ashes was not, until now, the subject of precise rules in the Church, as it was not a common practice.

Recently, Pope Francis answered questions relating to burials, including the conservation of ashes. Addressing himself to all Catholics, he affirmed that ashes must be conserved in a sacred place: a cemetery or a space dedicated to this purpose by the Bishop or other diocesan authority. Thus, the Pope warned Catholics that the conservation of ashes at home is not allowed. They cannot be divided within different family circles, in jewelry or anything else. They also cannot be spread in the air, on earth or in water because most of the time, this practice is accompanied by ideas, contrary to our Christian faith.

The complete text of this letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, duly approved by Pope Francis, can be found on the Vatican's official website following this link:

[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20160815\\_ad-resurgendum-cum-christo\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20160815_ad-resurgendum-cum-christo_en.html)