



GREEN BURIALS

JOSEPH TOOK THE BODY,
WRAPPED IT IN A CLEAN LINEN
CLOTH, AND PLACED IT IN HIS
OWN NEW TOMB...

~MATTHEW 27

HOLY
SEPULCHRE
CEMETERY

ASCENSION
GARDEN 



In 2013, Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and Ascension Garden were the first Catholic cemeteries in New York State to earn Green Burial Council Certification as approved providers of green burial grounds. Only after extensive ecological assessments and formal application was this honor bestowed. The certification furthers the commitment of Holy Sepulchre and Ascension Garden to the environment, and provides beautiful, natural surroundings while meeting the highest standards of the cemetery industry.



WHAT IS GREEN BURIAL?

Green burial or natural burial actually goes back in time to the way burial practices once were before today's conventional methods took hold. Humans are returned to the earth as simply as possible, ensuring the burial site remains natural in all respects. The interment of one's remains is made in a biodegradable casket or shroud. The body is not embalmed or if so, only natural and organic products are used so that there is no interruption in the natural ecosystem.

The green burial sites at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and Ascension Garden are specially chosen sections that enhance the natural beauty and environment that already exists at the cemeteries. The Trinity section at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and St. Francis Meadow at Ascension Garden are completely dedicated to green burials and offer natural settings. Memorialization is included at no cost on natural granite stones in the Trinity section at Holy Sepulchre, and on natural uncut stones found on the cemetery grounds at St. Francis Meadow at Ascension Garden.





NATURAL BENEFITS

Increasing numbers of Americans are opting for the simple beauty and grace of a natural burial. This practice has been quite common in Europe, and as the consciousness of the environment continues to increase here in the United States, so too does the desire for green burials. However, before a final decision is made about green burial, or for that matter any interment, it is important to understand the process and what it may mean to you, your family and your loved ones.

A green burial is a return to the simplified methods used for centuries before today's more conventional methods were introduced. The Catholic Church, like all Christian faiths, allows natural burial as they do cremation. Regardless of whether it is a full casket burial or burial of cremated remains, as long as the casket or container is biodegradable, it is permitted for natural burial. Burial vaults that are traditionally used to keep the casket enclosed are not used as part of green burial.



Catholics celebrate the funeral rites to offer worship, praise and thanksgiving to God. The Mass is the principal celebration of the Christian funeral, and is therefore important before any burial. If a green burial is planned, a “temporary” casket or enclosure may be used for the Mass and for necessary transportation. Funeral directors can accommodate this need, as well as provide natural options regarding embalming and funeral home visitation.

As in conventional interments, graveside services are welcomed when a loved one is laid to rest. The green burial sections at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and Ascension Garden are part of the overall cemetery grounds, so hours of operation are the same and visitation is encouraged as a vital part of the grieving process and to honor the deceased. Green burial sites usually have gravel or mowed paths, and it is recommended that appropriate footwear be worn and that visitors stay on the paths to avoid damage to the natural flora and fauna. Vehicles are not permitted in the natural burial sections; however, parking areas are available so visitors have ease of access to the grounds.





IS GREEN BURIAL RIGHT FOR ME OR MY LOVED ONES?

While green, natural burial was in existence prior to today's conventional burial practices, it is still a departure from the funeral and burial conventions that we've become accustomed to. We encourage individuals to review burial options, and to visit the natural burial sections at both Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and Ascension Garden before making a decision, as each cemetery is unique in its own special way and surrounding environment. Spending some time at the locations, and in quiet reflection, is especially helpful in making a decision.

In keeping with the pure meaning of green or natural burial, some of the standards or memorialization limitations may be too restrictive for some individuals, and conventional burial or mausoleum interment may be better. Both Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and Ascension Garden take great pride in the beauty of their grounds, and many of the trees, flowers and natural flora are native to the grounds and the region. Each garden setting is well maintained, and whether one chooses conventional or natural burial, the environments are peaceful, reflective and prayerful.

Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and Ascension Garden provide sacred resting places where you and your family may stay true and dedicated to both your faith and your environmental beliefs.

HOW DO WE PROCEED IN ANY CHOICE?

All of your questions and concerns cannot be answered in a brochure or even via a website. Seeing the actual setting where you or your loved ones will go to their final rest is an important step in the process of making a decision.

One of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery's or Ascension Garden's family service counselors will be happy to talk with you, take you on a tour and discuss the numerous options that are available at our cemeteries. The garden settings that were first envisioned in 1871 by the founder of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery—Rochester's first Bishop, the Most Reverend Bernard J. McQuaid—still exist there today, and are carried over to our new location near Mendon Ponds Park, Ascension Garden.

Cemeteries are truly for the living. They are environments where family and friends can remember, pray and celebrate their loved one's life. We encourage you to call us today to set up your tour, and learn more about sacred resting places at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and Ascension Garden.



SO WILL IT BE WITH THE
RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD.
THE BODY THAT IS SOWN
IS PERISHABLE, IT IS RAISED
IMPERISHABLE; IT IS SOWN IN
DISHONOR, IT IS RAISED IN
GLORY; IT IS SOWN IN WEAKNESS,
IT IS RAISED IN POWER; IT IS
SOWN A NATURAL BODY, IT IS
RAISED A SPIRITUAL BODY. IF
THERE IS A NATURAL BODY,
THERE IS ALSO A SPIRITUAL BODY.

~ CORINTHIANS 15:42-44



HOLY
SEPULCHRE
CEMETERY | ASCENSION
GARDEN

www.holysepulchre.org

Holy Sepulchre Cemetery

2461 Lake Avenue | Rochester, NY 14612 | 585-458-4110

Ascension Garden

1900 Pinnacle Road | Henrietta, NY 14467 | 585-697-1122

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