

## Our Columbarium and Memorial Wall:

### What is a columbarium?

A columbarium is a wall of niches to hold the ashes of those who have been cremated. The term “columbarium” comes from the Latin word for ‘dwelling place of a dove’. (Christians believe the dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.) Columbaria can be found in many cemeteries and in some church grounds. While columbaria have existed for over a hundred years, the Catholic Church has allowed cremations only since the 1960s, hence a columbarium in a Catholic parish dates back only a few decades.



### Construction

Our Columbarium and Memorial Walls were completed in August 2017. The aim is to provide a peaceful and respectful atmosphere, connected with the worshipping space of the community, which would enable family and friends to pray for, and reflect on their loved ones who have died.

The columbarium comprises two sections – the traditional Niche Walls consist of 175 niches into which cremated ashes will be placed, and a Memorial Wall consisting of 44 spaces for plaques to be placed in memory of loved ones who have been interred elsewhere. In the Memorial Wall, there is the facility for a memento of your loved one to be placed behind the plaque in its own niche.

The Columbarium—like the church graveyard of old, is a link between the living and the dead who are ever joined in the communion of saints. From Baptism to death and life beyond we share a common bond of love — linked by faith and prayer, honour and respect.

### Who can reserve a niche in our Columbarium or Memorial Wall?

Our Columbarium and Memorial Wall are available to parishioners, their families and those who have established ties with our parish.

Reservations of niches can be made now, even though the niche/memorial space may not be used for many years. A reservation cross is placed on the niche or memorial space to indicate it is taken. When a reservation is made, an Agreement between the applicant and the parish is signed.

### Prices

Please contact the Parish Office on 3356 7155 or [stafford@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:stafford@bne.catholic.net.au) for information about the cost involved.

### Plaque design

The plaques for our Columbarium and Memorial Wall will be of a standard size (152mm square) and design. They will be made of cast bronze and will all share the same print font with the option of a limited range of emblems.

### Access to the columbarium

Parishioners and their families and interested visitors are welcome to view the columbarium at any time, providing that they are respectful of anyone who may be reflecting or at prayer. The wall is part of the Liturgical space of the church and is near the front doors.

### Funeral process

Following the funeral service, the coffin is taken to the crematorium where the cremation takes place. (The Rite of Committal may occur at the church or the crematorium.) Within a few days, the family is advised that the ashes are ready. (They are appropriately presented in a box that fits into the columbarium niche.) The family contacts the Parish Office to arrange for the plaque to be made (which may take up to six weeks), and for the interment of the ashes into the columbarium.

If the family requests it a blessing, led by a priest or trained parishioner may be arranged at the time of interment or at a later date.

In the case of the Memorial Wall (no ashes involved), the wording on the plaque is determined when required, and the plaque, similar to the design described above, is attached when it is delivered.

