



Policy for Memorial Gardens, Monuments and Plaques

Approved by: Diocesan Council
Amendments:
File #609

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1. Memorial Gardens

Memorial Gardens are a witness to the Christian belief in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and to our assurance that we share in his resurrection to eternal life.

A. Establishment of a Memorial Garden (for the interment of ashes)

A Memorial Garden should be of limited area and abut a permanent wall of the Parish church, but ashes should not be interred in a zone 1.5m wide immediately adjacent to the building.

The area to be used as a Memorial Garden should be set aside by a special service of blessing or dedication.

An application for a Faculty to set aside an area of land for use as a Memorial Garden should be forwarded to the Diocesan Property Manager for consideration by the Architectural Advisory Committee.

An application for a Faculty must include:

- A copy of the Parish Council's resolution to make such application
- An attachment detailing a site plan of the church and its surroundings with a drawing (to scale) *and a photograph* of the proposed garden area illustrating the appearance against its surroundings

B. Establishment of a Memorial Register

On the establishment of a Memorial Garden, a Memorial Register should be established by the Parish, recording brief details of those whose ashes have been interred, such as names and dates of birth, death and interment of ashes.

The Memorial Register may take the form of a book with inscriptions suitable for display within the church building to family, friends and parishioners.

C. Interment of Ashes in a Memorial Garden

The Order of Service includes the words “earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust” in reference to the words of Genesis 2.7, “the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.” Our Christian practice is to mingle the ashes with the earth. This is quite different from the practice in some public crematoria where ashes are buried in the ground enclosed in a plastic container and may be removed at the end of a contracted period and disposed of where the contract is not renewed.

Ashes to be interred in a Memorial Garden should be emptied from the container into the soil. On no account should a container be buried. Further, ashes should not be scattered but deliberately interred *into the earth*.

The exact location of the ashes thus deposited should not be marked.



D. Visitors to a Memorial Garden

Family and friends should be encouraged to visit a Memorial Garden for remembrance and quiet reflection. Visitors should be asked to appreciate that, because of the intimate scale of a Memorial Garden, it is not appropriate to leave large bunches of flowers, or vases, or ornaments in a Memorial Garden. Flowers brought to a Memorial Garden are best kept small, simple, and natural (rather than artificial), and a Memorial Garden should be tidied regularly.

E. Monuments and Plaques in Memorial Gardens

The Memorial Garden as a whole is the place of remembrance of all whose remains are interred there.

Approval will normally be given for a monument or memorial plaque to commemorate the establishment of the Memorial Garden.

Approval will not normally be given for individual monuments or memorial plaques in a Memorial Garden because the intimate scale and reflective style of a Memorial Garden is rarely suitable for a steadily growing number of monuments and plaques.

Each situation should be assessed on its own merits upon an application for a Faculty being submitted to the Diocesan Property Manager for consideration by the Architectural Advisory Committee.

F. Relocation of Memorial Gardens

Any relocation should take place with utmost sensitivity and care, ensuring that the whole garden is carefully removed to a depth of about half a metre.

Removed earth should then be deposited either in a new Memorial Garden within the Parish church grounds, or a Memorial Garden of another Parish church.

The area of land no longer to be used as a Memorial Garden should be deconsecrated by a special service in conjunction with such removal or relocation. Individual monuments or memorial plaques should be given to the individuals' relatives or stored in an appropriate place in the Parish and details of their locations should be noted in a Memorial Register established by the Parish (see 1. B above).

2. Monuments and Plaques in Church Buildings

Church buildings are set apart by dedication or consecration for the celebration of worship, the administration of the sacraments and due performance of all other rites and ceremonies of religion according to the order and use of the Anglican Church of Australia and other activities consistent with the mission and ministry of the Church to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Approval will normally be given for monuments or memorial plaques to commemorate the establishment of church buildings and other such significant events in the life of Worshipping Communities gathering therein.

Approval will not normally be given for individual monuments or memorial plaques in church buildings, because they raise significant financial, missional and practical difficulties for Parishes and the Diocese because of the finite nature of space within church buildings and the ongoing cost of maintenance of such items through successive generations. Each situation should be assessed on its own merits upon an application for a Faculty being submitted to the Diocesan Property Manager for consideration by the Architectural Advisory Committee.

In prayerful recognition of the lives and contributions of deceased parishioners, details such as their names and dates of birth and death and bequests or memorial gifts should be entered in a Memorial Register (see section 1B above).