

Catholic Sacramental Disposal Matrix

A Quick-Reference Guide to Canon Law 1171 & Sacred Tradition

Sacramental	Examples	Preferred Action	Alternate
Combustible Organic	Wool scapulars, wooden rosaries, cord rosaries, blessed palms, candles	Reverent Burning Burn completely; bury ashes in clean soil.	Reverent Burial Bury intact 6–12 inches deep.
Printed Sacred Texts	Catholic Bibles, missals, prayer books, holy cards	Reverent Burning	Reverent Burial
Metal & Glass	Metal rosaries, crucifixes, medals, statues	Reverent Burial	Parish Collection
Holy Liquids	Holy Water	Pour into Soil	Sacrarium
Reserved Holy Oils	Sacred Chrism, Oil of the Sick, Oil of Catechumens	Return to Parish	Handled by clergy
Unblessed Mailings	Bulk holy cards or plastic rosaries	Recycle / Donate	Pious burial (optional)

The Four Golden Rules

- **Check for Minor Repairs First:** Replacing a broken rosary link or repairing a Bible cover does not remove its blessing.
- **Never Use Ordinary Trash:** Canon 1171 requires reverent treatment of blessed sacred objects.
- **Return Sacred Elements to the Earth:** Burning or burial are longstanding devotional customs.
- **Verify Mass Mailings:** Unblessed mass-distributed items are not bound by Canon 1171.

Prayer Before Burning or Burying a Sacramental

"Lord Heavenly Father, Creator of all things, I thank You for the spiritual protection and grace I have received through the pious use of this holy item. As I return its physical elements to the earth, renew my heart in true devotion to Your Will. Through Christ our Lord. Amen."

Parish Sacristan Contact Script

"Hello, I have worn blessed items (palms, wooden rosary) that need proper sacred disposal. Does the parish have a sacrarium or pre-Lenten collection bin for holy items?"