

Theology, Ecology, Burials

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"When you are promoting something" that deals with death and burial, "normally you have an anthropology, you have a view of what human beings are, and how they work, and where they're destined," he said. "There is a religious element, whether you like it or not."

For Citelli, "true immortality is to return to nature. That is where the sharing of and continuity of life take place. Because the transformation of the substances, of the organic material, gives life to death."

In the Catholic view, when a person dies, it is not merely that "a part of life has disappeared and can now sort of get mixed up in the ground and in the trees and in the plants," Father O'Callaghan said. "This particular person, who lived in this particular body, and who was loved as a person in this particular form, is being remembered."

Because the bodies of Christians have received the Eucharist during their lives, they have been carriers of God, the priest said.

A corpse should be seen not only as something loved by other people, "but also from the religious point of view as some-

thing that's sacred."

Because proposals for ecological burials vary from country to country, bishops and bishops' conferences "need to look into the anthropology, the eschatology and the theology behind" these diverse initiatives, he said.

For Father O'Callaghan, the important questions are: "Is there a real affirmation of the human body" as a "carrier of the Holy Spirit?" Is there "a clear element of the name of the person?" Is the commemoration not just of nature, but "of the person and the life they lived?" How is the belief in the resurrection represented?

"Very often that is represented by a headstone with a cross, which represents the power and salvation won by Jesus Christ," he said. Comparable symbolism, along with the name and dates of the individual's birth and death, would have to accompany any Christian form of a green burial.

"There's a very powerful message of concreteness, of that particular person who died in this particular situation, and his name and the date. The place is there; the cross is there. There is something that speaks to people in that," he said.

Don't Forget About Your Feet

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regular at-home foot examinations critical. At the sign of bumps, lumps or other changes in your feet, make an appointment with your foot and ankle surgeon.

- Exercise: Simple stretching exercises can help you maintain strength and mobility in your feet and ankles, as well as provide pain relief. Talk to your physician about appropriate exercises for you.

- Protect: Use padding, insoles or whatever special footwear you are prescribed. Be sure to wear these, along with comfortable, sensible shoes, every day.

- Be flexible: Know that at times, surgery is the most appropriate treatment for a given condition. Fortunately, many simple surgical techniques allow foot surgery to be performed on an outpatient basis.

For more ways for to keep feet and ankles healthy, prevent falls or to find a foot and ankle surgeon near you, visit FootHealthFacts.org, the patient education website for ACFAS. Foot and ankle surgeons are experts in providing both conservative care as well as surgical approaches to



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foot and ankle healthcare.

Remember, just one fall can permanently rob seniors of their independence and dramatically reduce their quality of life. Taking good care of feet and ankles however can reduce the risk of a life-altering slip, trip or fall.



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