



Miscarriage Ministry

Helpful Medical Information and Options available for the disposition of your Infant

It is the expressed desire of The Church of Saint Maximilian Kolbe to allow for the utmost dignity and respect for your baby, by allowing you to make informed decisions.

What if a Miscarriage occurs at home: Your baby's remains can be placed in a water tight container and kept cool. It is recommended that you follow up with your physician for maternal care, and you may wish for an optional examination of the fetal tissue. This macroscopic examination is an option available to ensure for an accurate description of the tissue, and there may be health implications for the mother. A cytogenetic exam is also an option. These fetal exams should be performed within a few hours of birth, and so likely require an emergency room visit and a physician's order through a hospital's lab. This is particularly prudent when the appearance of the tissue is in question. Your physician may also order future testing to rule out possible conditions, such as clotting and antibody/ auto immunity blood tests.

Prayer purses and support are available through St Max Kolbe's Miscarriage Ministry, as well as our *ministry outreach* through a patient care experience at the Buffalo Hospital Emergency department or Same Day Surgery department. These ministries provide information and assistance in regard to options that allow for your wishes regarding the respectful internment and memorialization for your baby. The prayer purse contains a **Perinatal Resource list**, of researched local resources; including churches, funeral homes, memorial events, literature and online resources. Parents additionally receive a memorial keepsake and container for baby's remains. Caskets are complimentary.

Death certificates are not a legal requirement for a baby that delivers under 20 weeks gestation, and a home delivery allows for full possession of your baby's remains. Best practice is to place your baby in a cool environment until burial. A macroscopic exam will require that you enter a medical facility and involve a consent form to have your baby returned.

Delivery in a medical setting:

Minnesota Statute 145.162 states that all health care institutions **may** perform a macroscopic exam on all assumed fetal tissue that contains cartilaginous structures, which is generally by 5 weeks gestational age, and that these remains can only be released to a licensed mortician for miscarriage after the approximate 5 weeks gestational age in Minnesota.

If you choose to retain possession of your baby, the Perinatal Resource lists local morticians that provide this complimentary service, they will most likely retain your baby, and wish to cooperate/witness the internment.

If one miscarries (under 20 weeks gestation) while under medical care, parents can opt to have the macroscopic exam. Hospitals should provide a consent form for both the exam, and specifically for honoring parents' wishes for the disposition of their baby's remains. This 'consent form' should allow for you to request the return of your baby to your possession, even after the macroscopic exam is completed.

If you deliver your baby after being discharged from a hospital and wish to have the macroscopic exam, and/or wish to have that same hospital provide for disposition of your baby, you may place your baby's remains in the container which is provided in the prayer purse. When brought back through the Emergency Department (specific for Buffalo Hospital) Nursing will then assist you with the disposition of your baby's remains through the Laboratory, in accordance with the Minnesota Statute (if no insurance coverage-approx. \$100.00). The exam process takes 1-2 days. Most hospitals should provide a similar service.

If you deliver your baby outside a medical setting, and choose not to have your baby examined, you may retain your baby until you arrange burial through the assistance of The Church of St Maximilian Kolbe, or another parish. If you wish to have additional funeral home assistance, Iten Funeral Home in Delano, and Peterson

Chapel and Funeral Home in Buffalo, are two local funeral homes that offer charitable transport, handling services, and caskets (see Perinatal Resources).

If you consent for a medical facility to retain your baby's remains, they will typically be cremated anonymously. (Specific to Buffalo Hospital- cremation and sprinkled anonymously over 'Babyland' section at 'Lakewood Cemetery' Minneapolis. This service is free of charge, provided by Allina. If you change your mind, and wish to have your baby's remains returned, a phone call to the Buffalo Lab along with written consent will make this possible, as baby's remains are retained for up to 6 weeks). Peterson Chapel and Funeral Home' in Buffalo, and Iten Funeral Home in Delano, are two local funeral homes that offer charitable transport, handling services, and caskets.

'Rite of Prayer' and burial:

The *Catholic church* provides for a blessing to be bestowed upon your baby in the form of a service for the immediate family. This Rite of Prayer substantiates our belief that life begins at conception for this consecrated holy innocent baby, and helps provide for spiritual healing. Local cemeteries vary on their fees for burial and plots. Some private cemeteries which are owned by a church community, allow for a personal inscribed burial marker and a minimal fee for burial, as well.

Some notable local parishes that have miscarriage and/or stillborn related ministries:

The Church of St. Maximillian Kolbe (campuses of St Peter and St. Joseph) in Delano, St Michael Catholic Church in St. Michael, Church of the Epiphany in Coon Rapids, and St Henry in Monticello. For more information, please see the accompanying '**Perinatal Resources**'. Some cemeteries also allow for a burial within the confines of a relative's burial plot. The Church of St Maximilian Kolbe provides for a Memorial Wall inscription at both cemeteries; Calvary and St Joseph. This serves as a permanent burial marker for your baby. These walls are interdenominational and contain a nearby internment site. Please refer to the 'Memorials for the Unborn' pamphlet.

The Catholic Perspective:

"Cremation has been permitted since 1963, however, the Church has always recommended the **burial** of the full corporeal remains in imitation of the burial of Jesus. Canon Law states, "the Church earnestly recommends that the pious custom of burying the bodies of the dead be observed; it does not, however, forbid cremation unless it has been chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching" (Cannon 1176.3). With cremation there has been the assumption by many that burial is somehow optional. It is not. Cremated remains are to be treated just as we would treat the full body. All of the cremated remains of the faithful departed must be placed in the same container and buried in a cemetery or entombed in a columbarium or mausoleum"... Father David Blume. For more information: www.catholic-cemeteries.org

May you and your family be blessed with eventual peace, and contented meaning for your loss, trusting that all life has meaning and purpose, no matter how brief, and that God's plan has been fulfilled in your precious little one.

Letting the Eucharist Lead: Allowing the love of Christ and the truths of His Church to transform our hearts and minds, and inviting others to journey with us.