

Commemorative Motifs, Mourning Images, and Memento Mori

Anchor	Hope, seaman.
Angels	Rebirth, resurrection, protection, judgment, wisdom, mercy, Divine love.
Ankh	Eternal life, peace, truth.
Arch	Victory in death, being rejoined with partner in heaven.
Arrow	Mortality.
Beehive	Domestic virtues, education, faith, abundance in the Promised Land, piety.
Bell	Mourning.
Bird	Eternal life, winged soul, spirituality.
Book	The Divine word or one's accomplishments.
Broken or Draped column	Early death, grief.
Burning Flame	Life or resurrection.
Butterfly	Resurrection.
Caterpillar	Life, metamorphosis.
Celtic Cross	Faith and eternity.
Chain With Three Links	Trinity, faith, Odd Fellows.
Column	Noble life.
Conch Shell	Wisdom, reincarnation.
Cross	Faith, resurrection.
Crown	Glory of life after death.
Crown upon Skull	Triumph of death.
Cup or Chalice	The Sacrament.

Cypress	Hope.
Dolphin	Resurrection, salvation, bearer of souls across water to heaven.
Door	Entrance to heaven.
Dove	Love, purity, resurrection, the Holy Spirit.
Drapery or Pall	Mourning or mortality.
Eagle	Courage, faith, generosity, contemplation, military.
Eye	Humility.
Eye of Ra/Horus	Sun/Moon, Life/Death, protection against evil.
Female Figure	Sorrow, grief.
Finger Pointing Downward	Calling the earth to witness.
Finger Pointing Upward	Pathway to heaven, heavenly reward.
Fish	Faith, life, spiritual nourishment.
Flag	Military, patriotism.
Fleur de lys	Perfection, light, life, royalty.
Flower (general)	Life's frailty, immortality.
Flying Bird	Rebirth.
Frog	Worldly pleasure, sin.
Garland	Victory over death.
Grim Reaper	Inevitability of Death.
Gun	Military service.
Hair, Flowing	Penitence.
Hands Clasped	Farewell, hope of meeting in eternity.
Harp	Hope.
Heart, Pierced by Sword	Virgin Mary, Christ, repentance.

Heart, Flaming	Religious fervor.
Heart	Love, devotion, sorrow, joy, mortality.
Helmet	Military service, strength, protection.
Horseshoe	Protection against evil.
Hourglass	Swift passage of time, temperance.
IHS	Eternity (Christian symbol: "In His Service" or "In this sign conquer") Commonly used in Celtic crosses.
Isis	Rebirth, the Virgin Mary.
Ivy	Fidelity, attachment, undying affection, eternal life.
Lamb	Innocence (specially on a child's grave), Resurrection.
Laurel Leaves	Triumph.
Lily	Purity, sometimes chastity.
Lily of the Valley	Rebirth, Virgin Mary.
Lion	Courage, bravery, strength.
Lotus	Purity, resurrection, perfect beauty, spiritual revelation.
Masonic Compass and Set Square	Freemasons, uprightness, judgment.
Memento mori	Symbol of death and reminder of mortality.
Menorah	Divine wisdom.
Mistletoe	Immortality.
Moon	Death, rebirth, victory, sorrow of the crucifixion.
Mother and Child	Charity, love.
Myrtle	Undying love, peace.
Naked Figure	Truth, purity, innocence.
Oak	Strength of faith and virtue, endurance.

Obelisk	Rebirth, connection between earth and heaven.
Olive Branch	Peace, forgiveness, humanity.
Open Gates	Afterlife, the soul entering heaven.
Orb	Faith.
Owl	Wisdom, solitude, a warning of impending death.
Pall	Mortality, mourning.
Pansy	Remembrance, meditation.
Pick	Death, mortality.
Poppies	Eternal sleep.
Pyramid	Resurrection, eternal life, enlightenment, spiritual attainment.
Rainbow	Union, fulfillment of the promise of resurrection.
Ripened Fruit	Nourishment of the soul.
Rod or Staff	Comfort to the bereaved.
Rooster	Awakening, resurrection, courage, vigilance.
Rope Circle	Eternity.
Rose	Victory, pride, triumphant love, purity.
Scallop Shell	Birth, baptism, resurrection, life everlasting, pilgrimage of life.
Scarab	Resurrection, transcendence.
Scepter	Fortitude.
Scythe	Death, cutting life short, the final harvest.
Severed Branch	Mortality.
Shamrock	Irish descent, Holy Trinity.
Shattered Urn	Old age.
Sheaf of Wheat	Old age, fruitful life.

Shepherd's Crook	Charity.
Skeleton	Death, life's brevity.
Skull & Crossed Bones	Death, crucifixion.
Skull	Transitory nature of earthly life, penitence, mortality.
Sleeping Cherub	Innocence (usually on child's grave).
Smoke	Vanity, futility of seeking earthly glory.
Snail	Laziness, sin.
Snake, Encircled	Everlasting life in heaven. (Also called oroboros)
Spade	Mortality, Death.
Spider Web	Human frailty.
Star	Divine guidance.
Star of David	Unity, transformation.
Steps, 3 Tiered	Faith, Hope and Charity.
Sun Disc, Winged	Spirituality, everlasting life.
Sun Rising	Renewed life, resurrection.
Sun Setting	Death.
Sun Shining	Everlasting life.
Swallow	Motherhood, spirit of children, consolation.
Sword, Broken	Life cut short.
Sword, Inverted	Relinquishment of power, victory.
Sword, Sheathed	Temperance.
Sword	Military.
Swords, Crossed	Life lost in battle.

Tablets of the Decalogue	Containing the text from Exodus and Deuteronomy given to Moses on Mount Sinai as a symbol of the Old Covenant.
Tetragrammaton	Four Hebrew letters Y, H, W, H spelling the true name of God, reminder of God's omnipresence.
Thistle	Scottish descent, earthly sorrow, defiance.
Torch, Inverted	Life extinguished.
Torch	Immortality, purification, truth, wisdom.
Tree	Life, knowledge, the fall of man through sin, human fruition or frailty.
Tree Sprouting	Life everlasting.
Tree Stump	Life interrupted.
Tree Trunk	Brevity of life, number of broken branches can indicate deceased family members buried at that site.
Tree Trunk, Leaning	Short interrupted life, mourning.
Triangle	Holy Trinity.
Triquetra (3 interlocking circles or triangles)	Eternity, Trinity, popular motif on Celtic crosses.
Trumpet	Announcement of the resurrection or the soul's entrance into heaven.
Urn	Immortality, penitence, death of the body and its return to dust in the final resting-place.
Violet	Humility.
Weeping Willow	Mourning, grief, lamentation, sorrow.
Wheat	Body of Christ.
Wheel	Cycle of life, enlightenment, spiritual power.
Winged Face	Effigy of the deceased soul, the soul in flight.
Winged Hourglass	Fleetness of life, mortality.
Winged Skull	Flight of the soul from mortal man.

Wreath	Victory.
Wreath, of Roses	Heavenly joy and bliss.
Wreath on Skull	Victory of death over life.
Yin Yang Circle	Harmony, balance, birth and death