

### Symbols -

While this list is not a complete list of all symbols used in memorial art, it serves as a comprehensive guide to some of the more popular symbols found in cemeteries.

**Aesculapian Rod:** A serpent and staff thought by many to be the proper symbol for doctors instead of the winged Caduceus.

**Anchor:** Hope; Jesus the anchor of the soul, traditional maritime symbol

**Axe:** A vow, consecration, defense

**Banner:** Triumph, victory

**Beads:** Prayer

**Bell:** Invitation, call to worship

**Birds:** Human souls

**Bishop's Staff:** Pastoral authority

**Book:** The Bible, Divine authorship, knowledge, scripture

**Broken Column:** Death

**Butterfly:** The Resurrection

**Caduceus:** Symbol of the medical profession (There are many variations depending upon the area of specialty.)

**Candle:** Jesus Christ the Light of the World, also the symbol of devotion

**Candlesticks (two):** Jesus' qualities as both God and man

**Candlesticks (three) or Three-Branched Candelabrum:** The Holy Trinity

**Candlesticks (five) or Five-Branched Candelabrum:** The five wounds of Christ

**Candlesticks (six) or Six-Branched Candelabrum:** The six days of creation or the six hours spent by Jesus on the cross

**Candlesticks (seven) or Seven-Branched Candelabrum:** The Church, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, or the Seven Sacraments

**Circle:** Eternity, completeness, perfection

**Crossed Keys:** St. Peter, Gates of Heaven

**Crown:** Rank, sovereignty, royalty

**Crown of Thorns:** The Suffering Savior, a Passion symbol

**Cross:** Christ and His atoning death, Christ's redemption of fallen humanity

**Dove:** Peace, purity, meekness, modesty, humility, the Holy Ghost, divine inspiration, innocence

**Eagle:** Christ, Holy Baptism, St. John

**Festoon:** Memory

**Fire:** Martyrdom, zeal, inspiration, youthful fervor, hell, purgatory, sacrifice, purification

**Fish:** Jesus

**Fish/Three:** The Trinity

**Five-Pointed Star:** The wounds of Christ, the Star of Jacob, Divine guidance and protection

Flaming Sword: Expulsion from Eden, with shield: St. Michael  
Grapes: The Eucharist, twelve bunches: the Apostles, clusters of grapes on a running vine: Jesus and His followers, the Church, unity  
Hand: Issuing from clouds: the Father  
Harp: Joy, music, symbol of St. Cecilia patron saint of musicians, associated with David and worship, worship in heaven  
Heart: Christian charity, surmounted by a flame: intense zeal or devotion  
Lamb: Innocence, purity, sacrifice, Christ  
Lamp: Knowledge, truth, enlightenment, Word of God, good works, Divine inspiration  
Pastoral Staff: Authority  
Pierced Heart: With a lance or spear, a Passion symbol  
Plenty, Horn of: The Lord's bounty, Thanksgiving  
Pomegranate: The Resurrection, immortality, royalty, fertility, The Church  
Pyramid: Light, strength  
Rainbow: Promise  
Ram: Sacrifice  
Rod: Official power, also a Passion symbol  
Rope: A Passion symbol, Judas' death  
Rosary: Prayer  
Rose: Love, Christ, The Nativity.  
Rosette: An ornament in the form of a conventional rose or other design of circular form, used as a decoration  
Scallop Shell: Baptism, the Baptism of Christ, Christian pilgrimage, and marine affairs  
Scythe: Death  
Serpent: Death, wisdom  
Seven Golden Candlesticks: The Seven Churches of Asia Minor  
Seven-Branched Candlestick: The Church, The Seven Churches of Asia Minor, The Seven Angels of the Apocalypse, The Seven Gifts of the Sheep, Christians  
Twelve Sheep: The Twelve Apostles, sheep and goats: the redeemed and the lost  
Shield: Faith, protection  
Shells: Christianity  
Shepherd's Crook: Authority, Dominion  
Staff: Religious jurisdiction, kindness, shepherd-like qualities/responsibilities  
Star: Christ, life  
Sword: Power, justice, authority, martyrdom  
Triangle: Trinity  
Trumpet: Call to worship, call of the Holy Spirit, Judgment Day, resurrection  
Urn: Death, sorrow (draped)  
Wings: Aspiration, flight of the Gospel

### **Flowers -**

While this list is not a complete list of all flowers, trees and other plants used in memorial art, it serves as a comprehensive guide to some of the more popular symbols found in cemeteries.

Apple: The fall of man, sin, Eve, discord, Virgin Mary  
Apple Blossom: Fame  
Azalea: Temperance  
Calla Lily: Sympathy, zeal  
Clover: Industry  
Cornucopia/Horn of Plenty: Bounty, blessings, Thanksgiving  
Cultivated Rose: Everlasting love  
Daisy: The Christ Child's innocence, youth, righteousness, innocence  
Dogwood: Crucifixion  
Easter Lily: Resurrection  
Grape: Charity  
Grape Vine: The Eucharist, The Church, unity, Christ and his followers  
Holly: Christmas  
Iris: God-like qualities, eloquence, a message, protection  
Ivy: Memory, remembrance, faithfulness, friendship, (often seen with oak)  
Laurel Wreath: Triumph, victory, distinction, reward, good report  
Lily: Easter, resurrection, the Virgin Mary, purity  
Lily of the Valley: The Virgin Mary, humility, purity, return of happiness  
Morning Glory: Resurrection, youth, promise, bonds of love and affection  
Oak: Strength, virtue, character, eternity, endurance, forgiveness, independence (often seen with ivy)  
Olive Branch: Peace, victory  
Orange Blossom: Matrimony, chastity, purity  
Palm: Victory, eternal peace, heavenly reward, success, righteousness, martyrdom, victory over sin and death  
Papyrus: Love  
Passion Flower: Crucifixion, Passion of Christ  
Pine: Eternity, everlasting life  
Pineapple: Friendship, hospitality  
Pine Cone: Fertility, regeneration, healing  
Poinsettia: Christmas, birth of Hope  
Pomegranate: Resurrection, immortality, royalty, eternity, The Church  
Poppy: Sleep, consolation, rest  
Rose: Love, Christ, Nativity, joy, martyrdom  
Rosette: Decorative form of rose in a circle  
Sunflower: Adoration, glory, the soul turning to Christ  
Thistle: Independence, austerity, sin, the fall of man  
Tulip: Love, charity, declaration of love, ardent affection  
Violets: Modesty, humility, graciousness, affection, faithfulness, sweetness, loyalty  
Wheat: Riches, thanksgiving, life, bread of life, Body of Christ  
Wheat/Broken: Death  
Wheat/Bundle: Harvest, bounty  
Wild Rose: Love, Christ, Messianic promise

