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Tamerlan Tsarnaev buried in undisclosed location

Lauren Markoe Religion News Service | May. 9, 2013

An undisclosed community on Wednesday accepted the body of Boston bombing suspect Tamerlan Tsarnaev, which is now "entombed," according to police in Worcester, Mass.

Tsarnaev's uncle, Ruslan Tsarni, found a funeral home in Worcester to handle the body, but had struggled to get a cemetery to accept it. *The Boston Globe* reported that the body is buried in a community outside Massachusetts.

"As a result of our public appeal for help, a courageous and compassionate individual came forward to provide the assistance needed to properly bury the deceased," read a statement posted on the Worcester Police Department's website.

Funeral director Peter Stefan of Graham Putnam & Mahoney Funeral Parlors in Worcester had been searching for nearly a week for a burial site. Tsarnaev subscribed to a radical brand of Islam and at least one mosque refused to accept the body.

Several cemeteries also refused, raising questions about religious, moral and professional obligations to bury even the reviled dead.

In the statement, Worcester Police Chief Gary Gemme thanked the police officers who had worked the security detail outside the funeral home, which was picketed by people who were angry at Stefan for accepting the body. Stefan said as a professional, he took an oath to assist any family that requested his services and he could not "separate the sin from the sinner."

The police chief also thanked Stefan and Tsarni.

"Most importantly," the statement continued, "we'd like to thank the community that provided the burial site."

Tsarnaev, 26, is thought to be the mastermind of the April 15 bombing at the finish line of the Boston Marathon, which killed three and injured more than 260 people. Four days later, he died in a firefight with police that his younger brother and suspected accomplice, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, survived.

The younger Tsarnaev is being held in a federal medical detention center outside Boston.

Several out-of-state cemeteries and a Yale Divinity School graduate who owns burial plots at the Mt. Carmel Burying Ground in Hamden, Conn., had offered a burial site for Tamerlan Tsarnaev's body, but it is not yet known if any of these offers were accepted.

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