

SAINT MARY'S PARISH CEMETERY ~ POLICY & PROCEDURES

A Roman Catholic cemetery reflects our religious beliefs concerning the faithful departed. Burial in consecrated ground is a sign of our baptismal commitment and gives witness, even in death, to our faith in Christ's resurrection. *"The dead are in the hands of God; no torment can touch them."* (Wisdom 3.1) The mortal remains of our loved ones await the resurrection of the body on the last day. We assist the dead spiritually through our prayers; most especially through assisting at Holy Mass where we link all of our concerns and cares to the life-giving Passion of Jesus Christ.

In Church Law a Catholic cemetery is a **sacred place**. *"In a sacred place only those things are to be permitted which serve to exercise or promote worship, piety, and religion. Anything out of harmony with the holiness of the place is forbidden."* (Canon 1210) Accordingly, the outward appearance of the cemetery should reflect faith, simplicity, and restraint.

Our objective is to maintain a cemetery that reflects Catholic teaching. This Cemetery Policy Manual is presented to inform both Parishioners and non-parishioners of the operation and maintenance of our Parish Cemetery. It contains clear, concise, and helpful information to aid everyone in understanding our policy. If you require further information, please contact the Parish Office.

RECORDS

- All graves and plots are recorded electronically. You are welcome to contact the Parish Office if you require further assistance.
- Specific information on those buried in the Cemetery is available at the Parish Office. Please contact the Office for further information.

RESERVED PLOTS

- Special consideration will be given to children when requested by parents.
- Plot selection determined by Cemetery Caretaker, family members of the deceased, and Business Manager.

OPENING / CLOSING GRAVESITE

Contact the Parish Office or Funeral Home to confirm procedure.

VAULT

The Vault is purchased either through the St. Mary's of the local Funeral Home at the request of the family.

BURIAL COSTS

- 1) A single grave plot is \$750.00
- 2) A double grave plot (side by side) is \$1,500
- 3) The opening fee is \$1,250
- 4) Other fees may apply due to seasonal circumstances and specific days of the week.

HEADSTONE / MONUMENTS

- One marker per grave - or one per plot, when desired.
- Each marker must be placed at the head of the grave.
- Quality made, privately constructed markers/crosses are permitted.
- The Cemetery Caretaker will oversee the installation of all markers at the cemetery. (See below for procedures)
- All costs associated with installation, maintenance and repair of the marker is the responsibility of plot holder.
- Families will be informed by letter when markers or personal items have fallen into poor repair.

- All symbols must be religious in nature. Non-religious symbols must be approved by St. Mary's Parish.
- Any inscriptions and/or sayings on the monument must be Scriptural or reflective of the Catholic Faith Tradition.
- The dimensions of the standard stone for a single grave must be 12"(w) x 24"(l) x 10"(h) for the Base and 8"(w)x 20"(l)x 28"(h) for the Headstone. Any deviations must be approved by St. Mary's Parish.

Installation Procedure:

- Families are asked to inform the Parish Office of intention to install any grave marker.
- Confirm placement of marker with Caretaker.
- Caretaker will be responsible for having a proper foundation / cement base prepared for the headstone / marker. (Gravel + cement base for a fee of \$400.00)
- Pay installation fee to company when ordering headstone.
- Installation fee can be confirmed by Caretaker - determined by the size of the stone.

CEMETERY MAINTENANCE

General

The general upkeep of the Cemetery is the responsibility of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish- not the individual families of loved ones interred in the cemetery or individuals who have reserved plots.

Individual Graves / Plots

The upkeep of individual graves (tending to the flowers, watering the plants, cleaning the headstones etc.) is the responsibility of the family - unless no family members remain in the community, whereby the onus then falls to the Parish.

To facilitate maintenance and to protect headstones, grass cutting personnel and machinery, we ask you adhere to the following:

- Funeral arrangements will be removed from graves within two weeks.
- Small shrubs are to be maintained at **maximum** limits of 3 feet in height, 18" in width, and placed in front of and/or beside the headstone.
- An area the width of the headstone extending 12 inches in front of the stone, and no higher than 12 inches, is allocated for personal use.

Restrictions:

- Luminaries: 1 stationary light per grave may be placed in front of headstone. Must be no higher than 12 inches and white in color.
- Fences (of any type) around grave sites or headstones are not permitted.
- Area behind headstone is not to be used.
- Remembrance Day Wreaths are permitted but will be removed after 10 days.
- Any other articles, which are contrary to public Catholic worship and piety, impede the general maintenance of the graveyard, obstruct grass cutting, detract from an aesthetic atmosphere or invite vandalism, **ARE PROHIBITED**. It is advisable to check with the Parish Office before placing anything in the Cemetery.

Effective February 13, 2025