

A
PLACE
FOR
THE
LIVING





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ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

MISSION STATEMENT

We, the faithful of the Roman Catholic Church in Philadelphia, in communion with our Holy Father, shepherd of the universal Church, and our Archbishop, shepherd of the Church in Philadelphia, proclaim to everyone the Good News that Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, who offers to all who follow Him the light of life.

Baptized into Christ Jesus and confirmed by the gift of the Holy Spirit, we desire to share this Light with all by proclaiming the Gospel of forgiveness and reconciliation to every person. We are one in our Church's teachings and in the variety of the gifts, services and ministries that we employ to help build up the Kingdom of God. We therefore commit ourselves to:

WORSHIP GOD IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH through "prayer without ceasing," and particularly through the celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments of the Church;

CREATE AND NOURISH CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY in the domestic church of the family, in the life of every parish, and in society as a whole;

PROCLAIM IN WORD AND DEED THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST to all persons, inviting each of our sisters and brothers in the human community to share our faith and our mission;

TEACH THE SAVING MESSAGE OF CHRIST so that all believers may come to deeper understanding, conversion and personal witness to Christ;

SERVE ALL OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, particularly the poor and needy, by generous acts of charity and by working together with all people of good will for justice and peace.

We pray to Father, Son and Holy Spirit, through the intercession of Mary, the Immaculate Conception, to whose care the Archdiocese is consecrated, and through Saints Peter and Paul, the Archdiocesan patrons. May the Lord of Light guide us in our earthly journey and to our heavenly home.

CHOOSING A CATHOLIC CEMETERY

A PLACE FOR THE LIVING



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Now I am going to tell you a mystery.

... all of us are to be changed
in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye,
at the sound of the last trumpet.

The trumpet will sound and the dead will be raised
incorruptible,
and we shall be changed.

This corruptible body must be clothed with incorruptibility,
this mortal body with immortality.

When the corruptible frame takes on incorruptibility
and the mortal immortality,
then will the saying of Scripture be fulfilled:

Death is swallowed up in victory.
O death, where is your victory?
O death, where is your sting?

1 Corinthians 15: 51-55

WHY CHOOSE A CATHOLIC CEMETERY?

"BY DEATH THE SOUL IS SEPARATED FROM THE BODY, BUT IN THE RESURRECTION GOD WILL GIVE INCORRUPTIBLE LIFE TO OUR BODY, TRANSFORMED BY REUNION WITH OUR SOUL. JUST AS CHRIST IS RISEN AND LIVES FOREVER, SO ALL OF US WILL RISE AT THE LAST DAY."

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH #1016



A PLACE FOR THE LIVING

Cemeteries have been part of Catholic tradition from the Church's earliest days. Ancient catacombs remind us that even in times of persecution, the faithful believed that proper burial of loved ones was preparation in hope of the day of resurrection.

Certainly a Catholic cemetery is a place for the dead. It is a final resting place in this world for mortal remains. Yet, staff in all of our cemeteries witness daily a steady procession of people visiting the grave sites of loved ones, in all seasons and in all kinds of weather, on holy days and holidays. A Catholic cemetery is also a place for the living, a place for grieving, for remembering, for reflecting and praying. Our dead have passed into an eternal life of fulfillment in love. The living must continue on in the

exercise of faith and hope. The cemetery is a place of faith and hope, a place to grow in both.



A PLACE FOR PRAYER

It is the purpose of a Catholic cemetery to provide a final resting place for the dead and to provide a setting in which faith and hope can grow and flourish. Catholic cemeteries are sacred places by virtue of their holy purpose and of the blessing they have received. Every effort is expended to insure that the setting and all activities within our cemeteries contribute to an awareness of their sacred character. It is intended that the surroundings be beautiful and peaceful, conducive to prayer and reflection.

Our prayers are for those who have died, for ourselves and

Surrounded by

stone

memorials,
and symbols
of our faith,
you may find

it easier
to focus on the
fleeting nature
of our time
on earth,
and on the
eternal life
to come.

a stressful time filled with grief and much pain. Usually the beloved has recently died and the funeral liturgy just celebrated. It is a time when faith is put to the test, when we are confronted with all the implications of death. It is also the time when the pilgrim Church, the faithful on earth, especially in the funeral liturgy, unite closely in support of one another in their loss and

give witness to their profession of faith in the mysteries of our redemption, resurrection and the communion of saints.

Catechism of the
Catholic Church #958



A PLACE FOR COMMUNITY

Our faith calls us to assemble as community for various reasons at various times. We usually gather at a cemetery for the burial of family or friends and later to visit the burial site. The gathering for burial is often

Our gatherings at the cemetery after burial are frequently less stressful, more peaceful, reflective, prayerful times. Often they are family occasions, opportunities to remember together dead loved ones. As we gather at the burial site we are able to see around us the beautiful setting for so many other faithful departed. We are in the presence of legions of the faithful who have gone on before us.

We are reminded again of the great communion to which we belong and that because of Jesus Christ the bonds that hold us all together are stronger than death. "So it is that the union of the wayfarers with the brethren who sleep in the peace of Christ is in no way interrupted but on the contrary, according to the constant faith of the Church this union is reinforced by an exchange of spiritual goods."

Catechism of the
Catholic Church # 955



A PLACE FOR EVANGELIZATION

Everything in the cemetery should contribute to an experience of the call to put our lives in order and seek a closer union with Jesus Christ. For some the visit to a cemetery is the time for coming to terms with the realities of life which of necessity include the experience of death. In the serene setting of the cemetery life is put into perspective.

An essential part of our faith is the understanding that we have an obligation within the time given us on earth to share the vision of our faith, to bring the good news that all things are gathered up in Christ, that nothing is lost, nothing is wasted. "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then he who raised Christ from the dead will bring your mortal bodies to life also through his Spirit dwelling in you."

Romans 8:11



A PLACE FOR TEACHING

The cemetery with its shrines, memorials, inscriptions, its obvious purpose and atmosphere of quiet serenity offers visitors lessons about the faith they could undoubtedly learn elsewhere, but not in quite the same way. While the liturgy and the sacraments are not

ordinarily celebrated in a cemetery, it is not unusual for the cemetery to be the place where we reflect on and relearn the significance of the sacraments in our lives. From birth and Baptism to final Anointing and death, and in all the life events in between, the whole community of faith accompanies us on our pilgrim journey. In our reflections on death, ours and others', we must again know that death is not the end. The celebrations throughout our lives of the sacraments, especially Reconciliation and Eucharist, all center on the saving mystery of Jesus Christ crucified, risen and ascended. We have the opportunity in the cemetery setting to discover again the larger context of our lives and deaths. We are taught in many ways we do not expect. While the cemetery is where we memorialize our dead, it is also where we find comfort in the sure faith that the God we serve "is the God of the living, not of the dead."

Mark 12: 27

A PLACE FOR SERVICE



Our practice of the works of mercy: burying the dead, comforting and consoling the sorrowful are acts of charity to which we are called by our Baptism. The preservation and maintenance of our cemeteries as places of beauty and peace conducive to prayerful reflection do in fact provide comfort and consolation for many people.

Cemetery staff understand, and are often reminded, that their service goes beyond the physical dimension of preparing graves and caring for the landscape. Through their work they try to help visitors experience and express their faith. They try to make the cemetery the place where a visitor is able to feel again that the "...ties of friendship and affection which knit us as one throughout our lives do not unravel with death."

Order of Christian
Funerals #71



A SACRED PLACE

“The Church who, as Mother, has borne the Christian sacramentally in her womb during his earthly pilgrimage, accompanies him at this journey’s end, in order to surrender him ‘into the Father’s hands.’ She offers to the Father, in Christ, the child of his grace, and she commits to the earth, in hope, the seed of the body that will rise in glory.”

Catechism of the
Catholic Church #1683



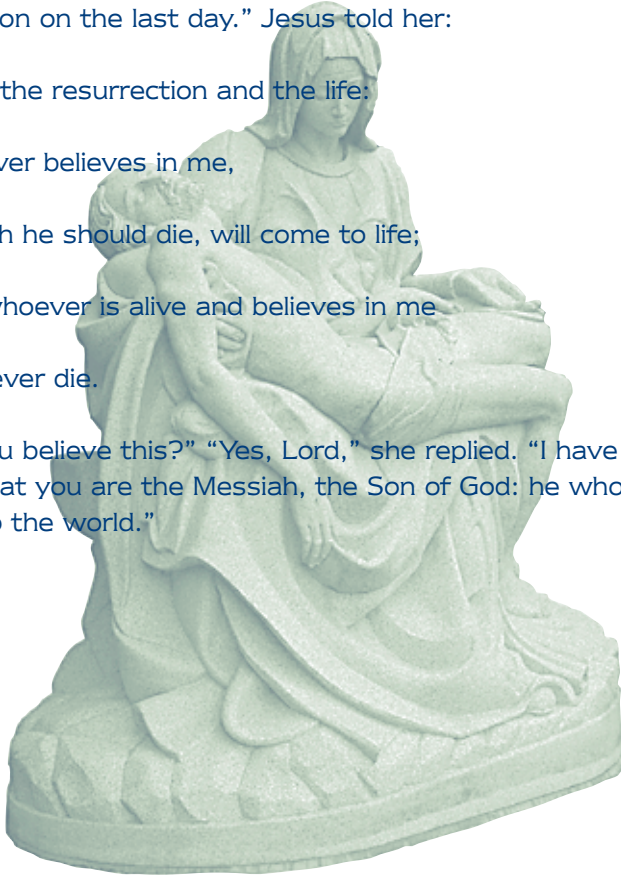
JESUS' PROMISE

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would never have died. Even now, I am sure that God will give you whatever you ask of him." "Your brother will rise again," Jesus assured her. "I know he will rise again," Martha replied, "in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus told her:

"I am the resurrection and the life;
whoever believes in me,
though he should die, will come to life;
and whoever is alive and believes in me
will never die.

Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she replied. "I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God: he who is to come into the world."

John 11:21-27



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AYER FOR THE DEAD

GOD of all consolation,
in your unending love and mercy for us
you turn the darkness of death
into the dawn of new life.
Show compassion to your people in their sorrow.

Be our refuge and our strength
to lift us from the darkness of this grief
to the peace and light of your presence.
Your son, Our Lord Jesus Christ,
by dying for us, conquered death
and by rising again, restored life.

May we then go forward eagerly to meet him,
and after our life on earth
be reunited with our brothers and sisters
where every tear will be wiped away.¹

"WHO THEN SHALL SEPARATE US
FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?"
ROM. VIII, 35

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AYER FOR THE ETERNAL REST OF THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

Into your hands, O Lord,
we humbly entrust our brothers and sisters.
In this life you embraced them with your tender
love;

Deliver them now from every evil
and bid them enter eternal rest.

The old order has passed away:
welcome them then into paradise,
where there will be no sorrow, no weeping nor
pain,

but the fullness of peace and joy
with your Son and the Holy Spirit
for ever and ever.

AMEN.²



A QUICK GUIDE TO CEMETERY POLICIES AND TERMS

Burial Permission

Catholic cemeteries are generally for the burial of Catholics because the Catholic burial place implies a sharing of common belief and the same community of faith. The archdiocesan cemeteries welcome non-Catholic family members as well. The Church believes that those who were together in life should not be separated in death.

Care of Plot and Temporary Displays

Cemetery staff are responsible for the maintenance of the grounds of the cemetery, including grass cutting, planting, and repair of the landscape. Therefore, only temporary, fresh cut flowers or potted plants may be placed next to a monument or marker. Nothing can be planted, dug into the ground or placed as an addition to a monument. Cemetery staff remove temporary displays regularly, according to posted notices. Artificial display items are not permitted.

Change of Address

It is the responsibility of the lot holder to notify the cemetery office of any change in address. This is important in case a question should arise concerning the lot or monument.

Cremation

Cremation is acceptable, although the Church prefers burial of the body. When cremation is chosen, burial of the cremated remains in a suitable container is required, as they are human remains which should have reverent disposition. Burial may be made in an existing family plot, or in graves and niches specially designed for cremated remains.

Donation of Bodies

The donation of a body or specific organs for medical research or organ banks is appropriate and should be arranged in advance. Subsequent burial or cremation of the remains must take place.

Graves and Crypts

Interment, that is, burial in an in-ground grave is the most common method of burial. A cemetery lot may have room for one or more interments, as indicated by the number of graves in the lot. Most graves in archdiocesan cemeteries can accommodate two interments.

For entombment, or above-ground burial, you may choose a crypt in what is commonly known as a community mausoleum. Some archdiocesan cemeteries have a community mausoleum with crypts available for purchase. Families may also erect their own private mausoleum or above-ground crypt in designated areas of some archdiocesan cemeteries.

Burial of Fetuses and Stillborn Children

All life is sacred from the moment of conception. Burial of fetuses and stillborn children can be made in existing family lots or in specially designated areas in the cemetery.

Outside Burial Containers

A concrete liner, or a metal or concrete vault must be used for all in-ground burials in the archdiocesan cemeteries. Vaults are not required for the interment of cremated remains; however, the cremated remains must be placed in a container deemed suitable for burial. Casket protection is required for all entombments.

Monuments and Markers

The type of memorial permitted in archdiocesan cemeteries depends on the location of the lot within the cemetery. Some sections are designed exclusively for flat markers, while other sections allow for the erection of upright monuments. Memorial options should always be considered when making arrangements to purchase a cemetery lot.

In order to assure quality and proper placement of the memorial, an application to erect a memorial is required by the archdiocesan cemeteries. An application to inscribe an existing memorial with a person's name or dates is also required. The names inscribed on the memorial must match the names of those on record at the cemetery.

An appropriate Christian symbol must be prominently displayed on all memorials placed in the archdiocesan cemeteries.

The family is responsible for the maintenance of the memorial. The cost to repair damaged memorials is often covered by the family's homeowner's insurance policy.

The cemetery reserves the right to remove a memorial if it becomes unsightly, or if its condition threatens the safety of staff or visitors.

Ownership Rights

Graves and crypts are conveyed by easement which does not convey direct ownership but an exclusive and permanent right of use. Even though the term "deed" is often used, you buy only the right of burial, not the land in a Catholic cemetery. The deed or easement is always required for a burial, or if any monument or memorialization work is requested. If it has been lost, a notarized affidavit is acceptable.

Upon the death of the registered owner, interment rights automatically descend to direct blood heirs equally, unless rights are specifically assigned to a particular heir in a will or other instrument. The spouse of the original purchaser always has a dower right of burial ahead of other heirs. When a non-blood heir is to be buried (except in the case in which he or she is named by the owner or in the record on file), all other blood heirs must give their permission.

Families should obtain such permissions in advance of need and file them with the cemetery office. Any special arrangements for the use of the family's lot should be on file to avoid confusion, even if it is stipulated in a will, or if there is a private arrangement among family members and/or friends.

Preparing for a Funeral

The following items must be provided to the cemetery, usually through the assistance of the funeral director, and no later than the day of the burial:

- **THE DEED OR EASEMENT FORM**
- **A WRITTEN GRAVE OPENING ORDER** with all details regarding burial (usually prepared by the funeral director)
- **THE BURIAL PERMIT** provided by the local civil authorities
- **THE CHRISTIAN BURIAL PERMIT**, commonly referred to as "Priest Lines" is an affirmation by the deceased's parish priest that the deceased is entitled to a Christian burial.
- **ALL APPROPRIATE FEES.**

Purchase Arrangements

You may purchase lots at the time of need directly from the local archdiocesan cemetery office. Your funeral director can assist you with this process.

Arrangements for the pre-need purchase of lots can be made through the Catholic Cemeteries Counseling Service of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

Thoughtful planning and financial prudence will help avoid hasty selections made at the time of need. Payment plans without interest or carrying charges are available. More information about the pre-need purchase of lots can be found on page 20 of this booklet.

All lots and crypts must be paid for in full before preparations can begin for burial or entombment.

Perpetual or Endowed Care

Care funds are essential for the continued maintenance and care of lots, roads, buildings and features in the cemetery. A portion of each lot or crypt purchase price is placed in a permanently restricted care fund. The interest earned by the funds on deposit is used to offset the aforementioned maintenance costs.

Return Privileges

Any unoccupied lots may be surrendered without question, and the full original purchase price will be refunded. If a lot is being purchased on a time payment plan, and the family decides to return the lot, the sum paid to date is refunded.

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PRAYER WHEN VISITING A CEMETERY

Almighty God,
through the death of your Son on the cross
you destroyed our death;
through his rest in the tomb
you hallowed the graves of all who believe in you;
and through his rising again
you restored us to eternal life.

God of the living and the dead,
accept our prayers
for those who have died in Christ
and are buried with him in the hope of rising again.
Since they were true to your name on earth,
let them praise you for ever in the joy of heaven.³



NATIONAL CATHOLIC CEMETERY CONFERENCE

CREED

We acknowledge that the Catholic cemetery is established to carry out the sacred religious function of the burial and care for the resting places of the deceased.

We accept the responsibility of implementing this religious function under the direction and supervision of the local Church authority.

We believe in and are firmly committed to the teachings and rich tradition of the Catholic Church with regard to the deceased and the sacredness of the cemeteries in which their bodies rest.

We recognize the deep religious significance of the Corporal Work of Mercy involved in the burial of the dead and reverence for the deceased.

We are dedicated to the respectful care of

the people of God who even in death remain a part of the whole Christian community.

We are committed to encouraging Catholic prayer and devotion for our deceased brothers and sisters in our cemeteries.

We will oppose any effort to minimize or destroy any of the Catholic teachings which relate to death, burial and devotion to the departed souls.

We will proclaim through our words, work and example the sacredness of the Human Body, the Belief in the Resurrection and the Christian Virtue of Hope.⁴



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RE-NEED COUNSELING SERVICE

Because the time of death is often traumatic, with emotional and financial strain, it is advisable to select a burial lot in advance. The Pre-Need Counseling Service of the Catholic Cemeteries Office allows you to make prudent decisions without pressure. Remember, the tomb in which our Lord was placed had been prepared in advance for Joseph of Arimathea. In Matthew 27:60, we read that Joseph took the body of Jesus “and laid it in his own new tomb which had been hewn from a formation of rock.”

You may contact the Pre-Need Counseling Service at (610) 525-0173.



ARCHDIOCESAN CEMETERIES

CATHEDRAL CEMETERY

48th and Lancaster Avenues
Philadelphia, PA 19131
(215) 477-8918
Est. 1849

NEW CATHEDRAL CEMETERY

Second and Butler Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19140
(215) 634-3212
Est. 1868

HOLY CROSS CEMETERY

626 Baily Road
Yeadon, PA 19150
(610) 626-2206
Est. 1890

HOLY SEPULCHRE CEMETERY

Cheltenham Avenue and
Ivy Hill Road
Philadelphia, PA 19118
(215) 247-0691
Est. 1892

CALVARY CEMETERY

Gulph and Matsonford Roads
West Conshohocken, PA 19428
(610) 525-2214
Est. 1945

SS. PETER AND PAUL CEMETERY

1600 S. Sproul Road
Springfield, PA 19064
(610) 544-4933
Est. 1957

RESURRECTION CEMETERY

5201 Hulmeville Road
Bensalem, PA 19020
(215) 639-0965
Est. 1959

SAINT JOHN NEUMANN CEMETERY

3797 County Line Road
Chalfont, PA 18914
(215) 822-0680
Est. 1983

ALL SAINTS CEMETERY
Newtown, Bucks County
For future use.

ALL SOULS CEMETERY
West Brandywine Township,
Chester County
For future use.

HOLY SAVIOR CEMETERY
West Grove, Chester County
For future use.

Information on diocesan cemeteries is available from the individual cemeteries, or from the Catholic Cemeteries Office. In addition, there are 50 parish cemeteries within the Archdiocese, although these are not listed here. Please contact the particular parish for details on burial in its cemetery.

F OOTNOTES

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