

Operating Your Catholic Cemeteries

Your Catholic Cemeteries are a visible witness to the core Christian belief — the Resurrection of Christ will bestow new and unending life on his disciples, mortality leading to immortality. Thus, every Catholic cemetery, as a sacred burial ground for believers, is a visible sign of an invisible reality...a source of grace...a gift of hope.

These Cemeteries should be genuine and beautiful, inviting and inspiring as places of faith and memory. They also must be practical and functional as providers of products and services.

Because Christ took a human body, died and was buried, we oblige ourselves to make and keep these Cemeteries as places of promise and hope.

Tension

Because our Cemeteries are in the world, yet point to another place, there is a natural tension between continuing the mission of Christ and continuing the operation of the Cemeteries: a tension between ministry and money. This is nothing new, nor is it peculiar to the Church. Everyone who follows Christ must deal with and somehow resolve this constant dilemma. How do we serve God and not just serve material creation by striving for money and possessions?

So, Cemetery pricing for products and services cannot imperil the lasting spiritual presence of the Cemeteries nor overburden the faithful who come seeking a place of final rest — we preserve a delicate balance.

Sources of Income

1. Burial Space: Graves, Crypts and Niches

Sale of burial space comprises the major source of revenue for the Catholic Cemeteries. This revenue enables the further expansion and development of land and building projects.

2. Various Cemetery Service Fees

Fees for burial services, inscription services, memorial foundations for markers and monuments are the second major source of Cemetery revenue. This income pays the operating overhead of the Cemeteries. With these fees we are able to fund the personnel, the physical plant, equipment, supplies and materials for the services and products we offer.

3. Memorialization of Burial Places

Other money comes from the sale of grave memorials and other memorialization, such as: emblems, crosses, vases, silk floral arrangements, wreaths and flowers. This money supports the continuing expansion of the beautiful, spiritual artwork and other features within our Cemeteries.

All of our fees keep the Cemeteries solvent so we can receive the deceased whenever our services are called for. Also, our fees provide supportive ministries and services for the living.

So, your investment with the Archdiocese preserves and perpetuates, operates and maintains eight Cemeteries and seven mausoleums in four metropolitan counties in southeastern Wisconsin. These Cemeteries comprise about 1,000 acres, over 60,000 crypts and niches, 3,300 burials annually while employing about 50 permanent staff and adding 70 more workers seasonally.

More About the Burial Service Fee

The term Opening & Closing has been associated with funerals and cemeteries for years and is spoken out of habit.

Although our Burial Service Fee does involve the physical act of opening and closing the grave, crypt or niche, it covers more than the isolated, orderly and reverent act required to place a body or cremated remains.

The Burial Service Fee sustains and maintains the entire structure of Cemetery services for our Christian Faithful — both deceased and living. It subsidizes the operation of the Cemeteries. There is a fuller listing of our operating expenses further along in this brochure. The range of expenses may be surprising to some.

Therefore, instead of emphasizing the physical act of opening & closing burial space, we prefer to emphasize the word service.

Once a deceased person is received into a Catholic cemetery, we assure reverent care and dignified treatment from that time onward. We maintain beautiful and prayerful environments to support the grieving who come to visit and pray. We provide bereavement ministry and offer grief education throughout the Archdiocese through this fee.

The Burial Service Fee is variable, set according to the type of burial required: whether full body or cremation, above-ground or in-ground. This fee must be paid in addition to the cost of the burial space. It can also be prepaid to avoid any further price increases.

Assured Heritage

The Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese exercise a ministry of service that continues uninterrupted in greater Milwaukee since 1857. Monies assure the continued presence of the Catholic Cemeteries for generations to come. The religious importance of these sacred burial grounds requires realistic and far-sighted financial management. The Catholic Cemeteries are non-profit, self-supporting institutions. Any money beyond the prudent fiscal needs of the Cemeteries goes into the program budget of the Archdiocese for broader ministries. Our relationship with the wider Church is important. We exist to serve the parishes. We are their parish cemeteries.

This mutually supportive relationship assures the long-term stability of the Cemeteries and the dedicated ministry of the Archdiocese.

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee Catholic Cemeteries maintains adequate care funds that exceed simple endowment and guarantee perpetual upkeep for generations to come.

The Least Among Us

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee Catholic Cemeteries strive to put into action the teaching of Christ and the tradition of our Church. We, as disciples, are obliged to take note of and assist the poor and needy. The poor demand dignity in death, even if it was seldom theirs in life. We welcome the opportunity to minister to those deceased who have no funds or family to care for them in death (*The Catholic Cemetery: A Vision for the Millennium, National Catholic Cemetery Conference, Des Plaines IL, 1997, page 41*).

The Least Among Us

continued

Our philosophy and policy include a preferential option for the poor and needy with total or partial assistance available upon request to Cemetery Administration. The assistance may include a grave, burial service and/or a memorial marker. At times this assistance is provided in conjunction with local government.

In association with four Catholic hospitals in southeastern Wisconsin, the Milwaukee Catholic Cemeteries provides burial services at no charge for pre-born children 20 weeks or less in gestation.

No one will ever be turned away because of true financial need.

More Than Meets The Eye

Catholic Cemeteries is a complex modern organization. These are general groupings of our services and operating expenses.

1. Ministry Services

- ❖ Chapels for committal services, private meditation, regular memorial Masses and other prayer gatherings, spiritual events and observances
- ❖ Religious art and shrines
- ❖ Spiritual Director (priest chaplain) and permanent deacons
- ❖ Director of Grief Education, grief education services and bereavement programs
- ❖ Pre-need and at-need Family Service Counselors
- ❖ Community information and outreach education programs

2. Office Services

- ❖ Trained office specialists
- ❖ Customer service assistance

- ❖ Burial arrangements
- ❖ Genealogy services
- ❖ Follow-up on family-initiated work orders and other service requests
- ❖ Data entry and financial accounting
- ❖ Maintenance of 150-year old burial records, both in paper archives and digital format

3. Grounds & Mausoleum Services

- ❖ Supervisors, grounds crews and mausoleum specialists, plus seasonal workers
- ❖ Maintenance and improvement of turf, grounds and roadways
- ❖ Special equipment for mowing, trimming, landscaping, digging and plowing
- ❖ Maintenance, improvement and expansion of mausoleums and columbariums
- ❖ Specialized equipment required for year round in-ground burials
- ❖ Specialized equipment needed for above-ground burials
- ❖ Gasoline, oil, natural gas
- ❖ Electricity, water, sewer

4. General Overhead Expenses

- ❖ Property insurance and health insurance
- ❖ Employee benefits
- ❖ Building and grounds security
- ❖ Public relations and marketing
- ❖ Legal counsel
- ❖ Audits and fiscal oversight
- ❖ Telephone systems, intercom and other office equipment
- ❖ Computer network, communication lines, web site development and maintenance
- ❖ Landscaping and annual plantings
- ❖ Waste and surplus soil removal; recycling
- ❖ Repair and replacement of equipment
- ❖ Administration of the Cemetery Division; continuing oversight by Department for Administrative Services and Department for Worship and Pastoral Services

A Final Thought

The Catholic Cemeteries, owned and operated by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee on behalf of the Catholic parishes, give witness to a faithful community of Christ's disciples — the deceased, the living, even those still-to-be-born — of all walks and stations in life.

We are committed to your family...those deceased and those living. We invite you to come — to laugh, to cry, to remember, to pray, to smile and to love.

Your Catholic Cemeteries are holy places for prayer, for memory, for service, for renewed purpose. These are sacred environments where...

*LIFE is remembered,
LOVE is deepened,
HOPE is rekindled &
FAITH is awakened,
renewed and
strengthened.*

Archdiocese of Milwaukee Catholic Cemeteries

CEMETERIES IN MILWAUKEE
Holy Cross & Calvary — 414-438-4420
St. Adalbert & Holy Trinity — 414-483-3663
Mount Olivet — 414-645-0611
OUTLYING CEMETERIES
All Saints in Pleasant Prairie — 262-694-2040
Resurrection in Mequon — 262-242-3850
St. Joseph in Waukesha — 262-547-4927

Web site: www.cemeteries.org

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
Holy Cross Cemetery
7301 West Nash Street
Milwaukee WI 53216
414-438-4420

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A DELICATE BALANCE

Ministry, Money
and Charity



Archdiocese of Milwaukee
Catholic Cemeteries

*A Tradition of Comforting Concern
Since 1857*