

St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery Policy

Greenwood, WI

St Mary's Cemetery Association

The St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery Association shall be composed of the St. Mary's Buildings and Grounds Committee and the St. Mary's Cemetery Sexton. The St. Mary's Cemetery Grounds subcommittee was created at the April 26, 2018, at the annual Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting, to address cemetery policy and grounds keeping issues at the cemetery. An annual meeting will be held to take care of any business before the board and meet as needed when issues arise.

1. CEMETERY FUNDS

Two separate funds are established for each Catholic cemetery: 1) a cemetery operating fund; and 2) a perpetual care fund.

- a. *Cemetery Operating fund* – Gifts to the cemetery fund that are not designated for perpetual care, annual interest from perpetual care fund, and monies from the sale of lots in excess of that designated for perpetual care and/or monies for the opening and closing of graves comprise this fund. This fund is for the everyday operations of the cemetery.
- b. *Perpetual Care fund* – Gifts designated for perpetual care of the cemetery and 25% of monies from the sale of lots comprise this fund. This fund is to be invested in **All Saints Perpetual Care Fund Management Inc.** and is treated like an endowment fund from which only the interest earned may be spent to ensure that cemetery property shall remain and be reasonably cared for as cemetery grounds forever.
- c. Cemetery funds may not be commingled with parish funds; therefore, completely separate accounts must be maintained. Two signatures are required on all checks written from the cemetery accounts – the Sexton, Priest or Finance Council Chair are approved signatories.
- d. Monies received through the sale of burial rights shall be used for cemetery purposes only.
- e. A financial report must be made to the diocesan Bishop at the end of the fiscal year. The financial report will be reviewed and approved by the St. Mary's Cemetery Association annually.
- f. In the even that funds from the sale of lots, interest on investments and donations are insufficient to properly maintain the cemetery grounds, the St. Mary's Cemetery Association can petition the Parish Finance Council for additional funds to insure a standard of proper care for the cemetery.

2. BURIAL GUIDELINES

- a. One full body casket burial is allowed per full body plot
- b. One urn may be buried above a full body casket.
- c. Up to two (2) cremation urns may be buried in full body plot without a casket.
- d. Markers for cremains interment can be upright when in line with other headstones. Otherwise must be flush with the ground to allow for mowing over the marker.

- e. When a son or daughter requests to have their cremains placed over their parent's vaults, permission must be obtained by a majority (>50%) of all living requester's sibling(s), in writing, and on file with the Sexton.
- f. It remains the right and Christian duty of the St. Mary's Cemetery Association to make special arrangements and adjust prices to accommodate the poor, destitute, unknown people, or multiple victims of disaster to ensure the dignity and care of all human remains.

3. FEES

A. Full plot (for full body casket) – 4' x 8' \$300.00

B. Burial Fees

- a. Excavation for full body casket \$525*
- b. Excavation for urn (contractor) \$275*
- c. Cremains excavation by Sexton \$100**
- d. Sexton Fee (family digs cremains) \$11.00/hour

(NOTE: Sexton is required to be present for all excavations.)

Excavation fee includes the opening and closing of the grave. All fees, excluding those for contracted excavations, are to be made payable to St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery.

***Cost is determined by the excavation contractor; therefore, subject to change.**

****Sexton is only able to excavate for cremains when ground is not frozen. When ground is frozen, families will need to use an outside commercial contractor. Families are not precluded from waiting for a more suitable time to bury cremains if the death occurs when the ground is frozen.**

Perpetual Care: All grave lots are sold with Perpetual Care. Perpetual Care includes: filling the top soil, seeding, mowing and trimming grass, planting flowers in the designated areas, and trimming of trees and shrubs on the cemetery property. Trees and debris will be removed as warranted to maintain the grounds and protect the monuments from damage.

Perpetual care does NOT include keeping proper care of monuments or markers. They remain the responsibility of the lot holder or their heirs, subject to the regulations and rules of the local cemetery. If no heir or assign can be located when a memorial is in need of repair, it becomes the responsibility of St. Mary's Cemetery Association to return the memorial to a safe and proper state, using cemetery operating funds.

4. OPENING AND CLOSING GRAVES

Opening and closing graves can only be done by personnel approved by the Sexton or the Cemetery Association. This includes full body graves and cremation graves. This does not preclude the family or loved ones of the deceased from exercising an option to excavate a grave for the deceased, limited to a grave for an urn or cremains only. This option, if selected, requires the presence of the cemetery sexton during the excavation to insure the excavation

meets the proper measurements established for the burial of an urn or cremains. The hourly rate of the sexton is to be paid by the parties exercising this option. The cremains excavation fee is waived.

5. MONUMENTS

No monument can be placed on any grave or lot without the permission or written approval of the Sexton. Plot must be paid in full before monument can be placed. The monument base must be a minimum of 4" thick and extend a minimum of 4" beyond all sides of the monument. The top of the base must be flush with the ground level for ease of mowing. Flush, in ground markers for full body burials must be placed in line within a row of monuments.

When possible, veteran's emblems are to be installed at the time the grave markers base is poured or set. Veteran's emblems that are at ground level will be centered in front of the grave marker/monument. When there is more than one name on the grave marker, the emblem will be centered in front of the veteran's name.

6. GENERAL GUIDELINES

- a. All the interments and removals are subject to the Canon Law of the Catholic Church, the rules and regulations of the Diocese of La Crosse, The State of Wisconsin, plus the rules and regulations of St. Mary's Cemetery Association.
- b. No workmen, other than employees or those contracted by St. Mary's Cemetery Association, will be permitted to work in the cemetery without prior approval of the Sexton or Grounds Subcommittee. This does not include minor monument care (ie: cleaning monuments).
- c. Cemetery plot holders purchase burial rights in said grave. Title of the land remains vested in the name of St. Mary's Cemetery.
- d. Regular burials of caskets must be interred in a vault; construction may be of metal or concrete. A vault is not required for the burial of cremains in urns at this time.
- e. With regards to all transfers, even if made among members of the same family, the Sexton must be notified of the transfer so all cemetery plat records are kept up to date.
- f. Damage done to a grave stone by a monument company is their responsibility. Damage done by cemetery staff is the responsibility of the cemetery. All other repairs are the responsibility of the family. Where no family can be found, maintenance becomes the responsibility of St. Mary's Cemetery Association.
- g. No glass or ceramic decorations, vases, or pots are allowed.
- h. No planting of trees or shrubs regardless of size is allowed without the written approval of the Grounds subcommittee or Sexton.
- i. Decorations should be secured to the stone or set on the stone base. Keep decorations on the ground in front of or around the stones at a minimum. Groundskeeper is not responsible for possible damage when trimming around stones.
- j. Shepherds hooks or similar holders are allowed.
- k. Solar lighting is allowed if it has a metal type base.
- l. In order to maintain the appearance of the cemetery, repositioning or removal of unsightly or out of season decorations will be at the discretion of the groundskeeper.
- m. All winter decorations should be removed by April 30th. All summer decorations should be removed by November 15th.

The Catholic cemetery is a reverent place where we visit the graves of our deceased loved ones. Like a church, it is a religious place and should be considered a sacred spot for prayer and reflection. Our duty is to maintain respectful care of the grounds according to the teachings of the Catholic faith and in accordance with the Diocese of La Crosse and State of Wisconsin.

As approved by the St. Mary's Building and Grounds Committee on September 24, 2019.

Cemetery Sexton:

Steve Hemmersbach
715-267-6224
czswbach@tds.net

Backup Sexton:

Position to be filled.

Cemetery Grounds Subcommittee Chair:

Carmella Lindner
715-267-7169 (home) or 715-937-2268 (cell)
tcindner@tds.net

Originally Published: November 5, 2018

Revised: October 23, 2019