

## **The Cemeteries' of St. Mary's and the Missions**

### **2020 Fall Newsletter**

This most unusual year has prompted many to finally get around to cleaning closets and even tackling fix ups and home renovations. Our cemeteries have noticed an increase in demand as many parishioners completed purchases of lots, plots, markers and niches in the columbarium. Truly, the important tasks we have been putting off finally found new energy in the dynamics of the pandemic. Our manager, Angela Corrigan, is anxious to assist you in making pre need arrangements or facilitating a marker placement. Prices go up in January 2021 so it is prudent to act soon.

All 4 cemeteries have an ample inventory of in ground burial and cremation plots. Our present 48 niches columbarium is filling up rapidly. It provides the option to purchase a niche for 2 urns including a plaque for under \$3000. A Memory Wall is a unique feature of our columbarium. Brass plaques with the name of a loved one who is interred at another location are mounted on the handsome granite face. This memorial in a prayerful setting keeps them in our hearts and minds forever. Who would you like to remember and commend to our prayers?

Our columbarium was purchased in 2016 and was fully funded by a generous parishioner. As the proverbial seed of the gospel, it has yielded good fruit. We are now in a position to add 2 more 48 niches columbaria next spring. The cost of these additional units will be met from the sales of niches in the original unit. The growth of our columbaria and their perpetual care is self-sustaining. Good news!

After completing the new road construction at St. Mary's Cemetery in Hepworth in 2019, no major projects were undertaken in 2020. This was an unforeseen blessing as administering sales and regular maintenance was a challenge. The roadway at St. Stanislaus' in Chatsworth will be leveled and new gravel added before snowfall. The trees lining the north roadway at St. Mary's Georgian Bluffs will be trimmed back this month to permit easy access for the new columbaria in late spring. Our cemetery manager has moved into an office in the newly constructed Parish Centre addition and records are safely stored in an adjacent spacious fireproof vault.

Our rural cemeteries will close from December 1 to April 1. Flowers and ornaments must be removed from all cemeteries by December 1<sup>st</sup> for the sake of safety and appearance. Visitors to the cemeteries are asked to practice social distancing and observe Covid-19 protocols.

November is the traditional month of remembrance. We pray for those in our book of remembrance. Our liturgies celebrate All Saints and All Souls. Our nation pauses to remember those whose lives were sacrificed in the cause of peace. Today you are asked to contribute to the care and maintenance of our 4 parish cemeteries. Bishop Crosby will match your donation dollar for dollar to be placed in an endowment for perpetual care. Only interest on these funds can be used for revenue on an annual basis. St Stanislaus' Chatsworth and St. Mary's Hepworth are in great need of a boost since annual grass cutting costs exceed the interest received from their endowment.

You can support our cemeteries by purchasing a lot, plot, niche or memory wall plaque or by making a bequest to the Cemetery Fund. There are great tax advantages to making a bequest now or in your last will and testament. Your financial planner can help you with this.

Today or on any weekend during November you are asked to return your Parish Cemeteries – All Soul's Day offering. Those with envelope boxes will find an envelope dedicated to this collection. Extra envelopes can be picked up at the back of the church this month. If you are not attending in person masses please mail your donation marked "Cemetery Collection" directly to the parish office at the address on the front of the bulletin.

St. Mary's & the Missions are blessed to have 4 beautiful cemeteries that serve as the resting place of generations who have gone before us. We hold these properties in sacred trust with an inherent obligation to care for them in perpetuity. We are always grateful for your generous support, however in this unusual year we make a special request to you to make your best efforts to share your blessings with our cemeteries.

**Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Cemeteries' Board,**

**Michael Donovan, Current Chairperson**