

Rules and Regulations for St. Mary

and Greenlawn Cemeteries

from

Handbook for Parish Cemeteries of the Altoona Johnstown Diocese
and
Cemetery Committee of St. Michael's Parish, Hollidaysburg

Introduction

From the time that the Sacred Body of Our Crucified Savior was laid in the tomb to await the hour of His glorious Resurrection, the Church has been most solicitous to surround with an atmosphere of Christian faith and reverence the burial of those who will rise with Christ. As a further seal and symbol of that faith she sets apart and blesses the place in which the bodies of her faithful departed await the day of Resurrection.

In the very earliest days, Mother Church found it necessary to make rules and regulations which would protect the sacred places and the relics laid therein. She could not and would not allow anything within the holy precincts which would desecrate them, lessen their beauty or bring dishonor on the dead.

To ensure the sacred character of parish cemeteries in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, each Cemetery is governed by the Pastor relying on the Cemetery's rules and Regulations, the Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church and applicable Directives issued by the Bishop of the Diocese. Copies of both the Rules and Regulations and the diocesan Directives are available for review in the Parish office.

This is a Catholic Cemetery operated and maintained for the interment of those entitled to Christian burial according to the guidelines of the Roman Catholic Church. When one purchases a Burial Privilege Certificate, he or she and heirs bind themselves to the governing principles mentioned above currently in effect, or as amended in the future. Violation of these principles may result in the forfeiture of one's privilege to use the burial plot. When a plot holder is dissatisfied with the Pastor's application of these Directives, Rules and Regulations, appeal may be made to the Diocesan Bishop. He or his designated representative will make the final decision.

Buyer's Rights and Responsibilities

1. The purchase of a burial privilege certificate, whether in a grave or a crypt, does not acquire title to the property itself.
2. Plots or graves are for family use, they may not be sold for profit by holders of Burial Privilege Certificates. All interments must be in accord with Church Law. No symbols or ceremonies, religious or otherwise, may be used or performed that would be against Christian principles.

3. This is a Catholic Cemetery. To keep its distinctly religious nature, only Christian symbols are permitted on the memorials. Scenes depicting a decedent's occupation, hobbies, interests, fraternal associations, and so on, are not appropriate. The depiction of animals as found in Sacred Scripture is appropriate if the Scripture verse is used with it to show that it is of a religious nature. Therefore, Management requests a printed diagram showing the design and specifications for each memorial and inscription for advance approval.
4. All memorials are to be finished in accordance with trade standards and good craftsmanship. They must be in proportion to the size of the lot. Their foundations must be installed by qualified bonded contractors under the supervision of Cemetery personnel as directed by Management.
5. In the event that a memorial does not conform to the specifications as approved, Management will request that the memorial be removed by the dealer, otherwise the Management reserves the right to remove it at the expense of the dealer.
6. Monument dealers and outside contractors are considered independent contractors and are to be bonded for work in the Cemetery. Management is not responsible for defects in memorials or foundations caused by the monument dealer.
7. Perpetual Care includes filling in sunken graves, seeding, cutting of grass, and trimming around memorials. Care does not include placement, maintenance, or repair of any monuments or the planting of flowers or ornamental plants on specific plots.
8. To avoid creating obstacles to the routine care and maintenance of the Cemetery, plot holders may not plant and prune flowers, shrubs or trees, nor may they erect fences, border arrangements, furniture, or any decorations on their plot without prior approval of Management.
9. Management is not liable for damage arising from vandalism, natural disasters, public unrest, or any cause beyond the reasonable control of Management.
10. Management may refuse to open a grave or permit the placement of a memorial when:
 - 1) Just debts are not paid (e.g., unpaid balance on a plot, annual plot care, or perpetual care); or
 - 2) When there is a question of ownership of the plot.
11. Management may, at its discretion, repurchase plots, graves, or crypts at original cost minus any outstanding expense. Any transfer of ownership rights must be made by Management.

12. Plot holders are to keep Management informed of their current address. The address on file will be considered the legal address for notices pertaining to the Cemetery.
13. In the event of the death of a plot holder, all privileges in the plot shall pass to the spouse; then to those named or designated in instructions left for the Cemetery or in the will; then to those chosen by a joint decision of the legal heirs; finally, to those designated according to the Pennsylvania law of intestacy. A new Burial Privilege Certificate is to be issued in all instances by Management.
14. All inquiries and business concerning the Cemetery are to be made in writing or by appointment only.

Visitors Responsibilities

1. This Cemetery is private property. The Cemetery is always closed from dusk to dawn.
2. All persons entering the Cemetery for whatever reason must display proper respect for the deceased and for the sacred ground in which they are interred. Management reserves the right to take such measures as the circumstances warrant in order to ensure strict observance of this basic principle.
3. There is to be no loitering or unlawful assembly, no boisterous language or inappropriate actions, no alcohol, or controlled substances in the Cemetery.
4. No firearms may be brought to the property or discharged without permission of Management. Hunting on Cemetery property, littering and vandalism are punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment. Violators will be prosecuted.
5. All off-highway vehicles, including bikes, skateboards, roller blades, snowmobiles, etc. are prohibited in the Cemetery. No illegal parking of cars is permitted. The speed limit in the Cemetery is 15MPH.
6. Identification may be required of visitors by Cemetery personnel; in extreme cases, a Burial Privilege Certificate may be required of the visitor.
7. Unless otherwise specified in the Cemetery's Rules and Regulations, children under the age of 14 must be accompanied by a parent or other adult. Only trained seeing-eye dogs are permitted on Cemetery grounds.
8. All Cemetery Rules and Regulations apply to the Mausoleum.
9. Management reserves the right to make improvements to the Cemetery at all times.
10. In all matters not herein specifically covered, Management shall have the right to determine and decide any and all questions that shall arise.

Additional Rights and Responsibilities: St. Mary and Greenlawn Cemetery of St. Mary and St. Michael the Archangel Church, Hollidaysburg, Pa.

1. When one purchases a burial space, he/she and heirs are entitled to: a.) a place of burial, and b.) the right to a monument, stone or marker approved by the Cemetery.
2. There can be no digging of graves in the cemetery except by cemetery personnel or bonded approved persons with permission.
3. Artificial flowers and arrangements will be removed from the cemetery before each mowing if they become a safety hazard. Winter decorations are to be removed by March 1st each year; Fall decorations by November 15th.
4. Statues of any material are permitted only if they are a part of the stone, and prior to installation. No vigil lights, no solar lights, or other artificial lights are allowed in the cemetery.
5. Live flowers may be planted up to six inches in front of the stone base of a monument or stone. They are to be cared for by the lot owner or one designated. In the event they are not cared for, the cemetery will remove them. Flowers are to be planted in the ground. Boxes of flowers and potted flowers are allowed if they are maintained; otherwise, the cemetery staff will remove them. There are to be no metal edgings, fences, or wire guards put around flowers.
6. The foundations of all stones will be installed by qualified bonded persons approved by the cemetery association and within the guidelines of the cemetery.
7. Burial vaults are required except for children under the age of one year, or for cremation urns. Cremation urns are to be buried either in their own lot or on top of an existing burial. If this takes place on an existing burial, there is a fee; it must follow the cemetery policy on the placement in the lot, and only a flat stone can be added to the lot. Only one basket of flowers is permitted on the grave at the time of burial. Children due to the size of the caskets are to be buried in their own space.
8. If a party cannot pay the entire sum to the cemetery for the purchase of a burial space/spaces, it would be expected that they would pay the remaining amount within one year of the purchase date. If the entire sum owed is not paid within one year, the burial space/spaces will revert back to the cemetery. Any money paid as a down payment will be returned after the maintenance costs over the entire period for the burial space/spaces has been deducted. The issuing of the easement document will not be given to the party until the full amount is paid. Also, no tombstones can be set, or any grave openings or burial can be made until the unpaid balance is paid. The Cemetery Committee reserves the right to make exceptions to the above on a case-by-case basis.

9. Payment for the burial space:

a. For the purchase of a burial space for immediate interment, the full cost should be paid prior to the interment.

b. Any additional burial spaces must have a (50) fifty percent down payment with the remaining amount to be paid within a year from the purchase.

c. The Cemetery Committee reserves the right to make exceptions to the above on a case-by-case basis.