

# **Our Lady Queen of Angels Catholic Church**

## **Central City, Pennsylvania**

Sacred Heart of Jesus Cemetery – St. John the Baptist Cemetery

### **Handout for Plot Holders – Issued October 11, 2016**

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 insure 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.

Sacred Heart of Jesus and St John the Baptist Cemeteries are Catholic Cemeteries 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.

Please note that the use of the term "management" in this document refers to the pastor and to any cemetery committee member delegated by the pastor to help manage the cemeteries.

### **Buyer's Rights and Responsibilities**

1. The purchase of a burial privilege certificate does not acquire title to the property itself.
2. Plots 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. Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. John the Baptist Cemeteries are Catholic cemeteries. To keep their 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 cemeteries, 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. If shrubs or trees have become too large or unmanageable Management reserves the right to remove them at their discretion.
9. Management is not liable for damages 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; 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 expenses. 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 cemeteries are to be made in writing or by appointment only.

### **Visitors Responsibilities**

1. Our cemeteries are private property. The cemeteries are always closed from dusk to dawn. Persons entering the cemeteries 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 measures, as the circumstances warrant, in order to ensure strict observance of this principle.

2. There is to be no loitering or unlawful assembly, no boisterous language or inappropriate actions, no alcohol or controlled substances in the cemeteries. No firearms may be brought on to the property or discharged without permission of Management. Hunting on the cemetery properties, littering and vandalism are punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment. Violators will be prosecuted.

3. 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. Identification may be required of visitors by cemetery personnel; in extreme cases, a Burial Privilege Certificate may be required of the visitor. Unless otherwise specified otherwise, children under the age of 14 must be accompanied by a parent or another adult. Only trained seeing-eye dogs are permitted on cemetery grounds.

4. All artificial decorations will be removed from graves each year on/or near November 1<sup>st</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup>.

5. Management reserves the right to make improvements to the cemeteries at all times. In all matters not herein specifically covered, Management shall have the right to determine and decide any and all questions that shall arise.

### **Fees Related to the Cemeteries**

Approved by the Pastor in conjunction with the Parish Cemetery Committee and Parish Council. Effective October 11, 2016.

Plot - Defined as ONE grave

Cost of Plot - (Includes Cost of Perpetual Care) - Parishioner \$300 - Non-Parishioner \$500

Grave Opening - \$500 (\$450 to be paid to the grave digger, \$50 to be retained by the parish for reclamation costs).

Cremation - \$125 (all inclusive).

Organist for Funeral Mass - \$75 - to be paid to the organist directly by the family.

There will be NO fee collected by the church for the funeral rites.

No additional perpetual care fess will be exacted once a plot is purchased.

While the parish office must be notified when installation of a veteran plaque occurs, no fee for the installation of a veteran plaque supplied by the Veterans' Administration will be exacted by the cemetery.

Footers for grave stones are to be dug by the monument dealer - all fees related to this matter are between the contracting party and the dealer. Any monument dealer who wishes to install a monument must pay a \$10.00 permit fee per monument and have a footer that is acceptable to the management. A monument dealer who does not observe this regulation will not be permitted to do any future work in our parish cemeteries.

Any modification made to an approved/installed monument, other than date inscription, must be submitted and approved by the management. An additional \$10.00 permit fee is required for any changes to the memorial beyond date inscription. A monument dealer who does not observe this regulation will not be permitted to do any future work in our parish cemeteries.