

**OUR MISSION**

*To perform the Corporal Work of Mercy of burying the dead and to care for their resting places; to preserve, promote and protect the Church's teachings on death and resurrection; and to console the bereaved.*

## RESPECT FOR THE BODY Even In Death

by Most Rev. Donald W. Wuerl

### The Catholic Vision of Death

Our Catholic faith presents us with a consoling view of human mortality. As the preface for the funeral Mass tells us, we believe that "life is changed, not ended." With firm faith and in full expectation of the resurrection, we bury our dead. Christian funerals and burials are acts of faith, not declarations of despair.

From baptism through every stage of the believer's life, Christ is present in His church, blessing, anointing, healing, saving, ministering, instructing, guiding, caring for and loving each of His disciples. There is no more appropriate conclusion to a Christian life than a Catholic funeral in the deceased one's parish church followed by burial in ground that has been blessed in anticipation of the resurrection.

Each of us will enjoy our own Easter day. Just as on the first resurrection morning Christ broke the chains of death and rose from the tomb to a life that would have no end, so too do we, followers of Jesus and believers in His word, look forward to a personal resurrection of the body. This is not a casual hope or extravagant expectation but rather a firm conviction tied primarily to our faith in the Risen Lord.



The  
**CATHOLIC  
CEMETERIES  
ASSOCIATION**  
DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH

### The Resurrection Of The Body

The "Catechism of the Catholic Church" tells us "The Christian creed ... culminates in the proclamation of the resurrection of the body on the last day and in life everlasting" (988). It goes on to proclaim "We firmly believe, and hence we hope that, just as Christ is truly risen from the dead and lives forever, so after death the righteous will live forever with the Risen Christ and He will raise them up on the last day" (989).

Catholic teaching on what it means to be a human person, and on the power of Christ's Resurrection, calls for faith in our bodily resurrection. All of us, both those who are saved and those who have rejected salvation, will rise again with our own bodies. Those who have died will receive new life. The church firmly believes and steadfastly teaches that on the day of judgment all will appear before the tribunal of Christ with their own bodies to give an account of their deeds and to be judged.

Our belief in the resurrection of the dead accounts for our ancient practice of praying for those who have died in anticipation of the resurrection and also for our practice of burying the dead after having commended them to God in a solemn funeral liturgy. While we await the resurrection of the body, the earthly remains that housed the gift of God's Spirit and were a temple of that Spirit are treated with respect, buried with dignity and recognized as that portion of the person awaiting resurrection.

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Respect For The Body Even In Death (continued)

At the conclusion of the funeral Mass, the priest sprinkles the body with holy water and incenses it because it has been a temple of the Holy Spirit and will be called to bodily resurrection on the last day.

**Christian Burial**

Finally the body is taken to the grave site for interment. The church's preference is always for burial. "The bodies of the dead must be treated with respect and charity, in faith and hope of the resurrection" (CCC 2300).

Catholic cemeteries exist to receive the remains for burial either interment (in the ground) or in a mausoleum to await the resurrection of the body on the last day. The ritual also makes provision for burial at sea.

Catholic cemeteries continue to provide a ministry in the church that recognizes the uniquely Christian understanding of death. They also provide us with holy ground where we can with some regularity, such as Memorial Day or All Souls Day, remember our dead, recall their goodness to us and ask God's blessing on them. We pray for the dead with the full awareness that we too shall follow in their steps.

We need to make sure that when we make arrangements for our own death or that of a loved one, a funeral Mass in church and burial in a Catholic cemetery are included.

Clearly burial of the bodily remains is the preferred manner of caring for the dead. However, the church permits cremation as long as it does not symbolize or demonstrate a denial of faith in the resurrection of the body (CCC 2301).

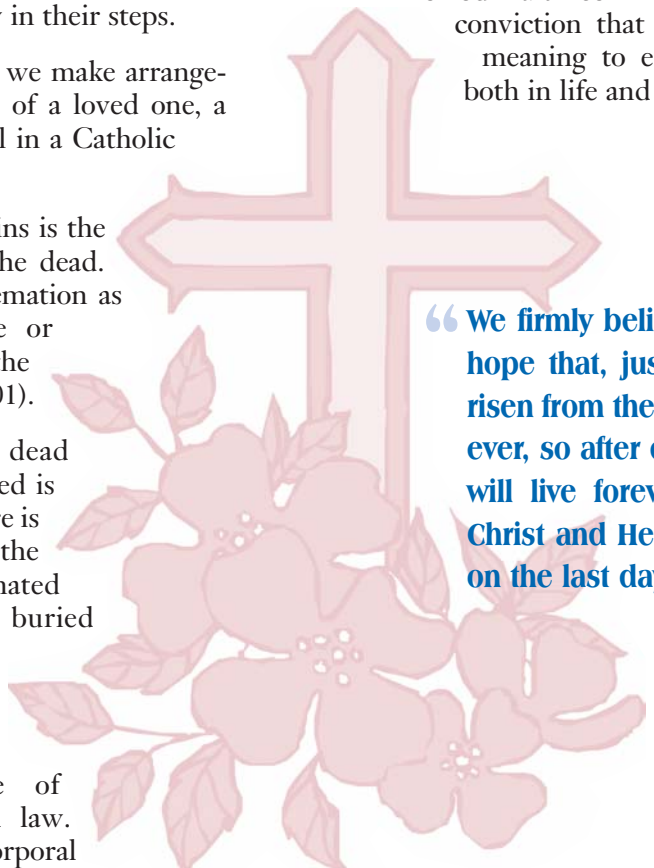
Liturgically, the body of the dead person even if it has been cremated is blessed and is to be interred. There is no provision in the church for the scattering of ashes. The cremated remains of a body should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium (Order of Christian Funerals, Appendix 2: Cremation, 417). The norms of the Diocese of Pittsburgh reflect this liturgical law. "The burial of the dead is a corporal

work of mercy; it honors the children of God who are temples of the Holy Spirit" (CCC 2300).

In the final resurrection, our bodies will be transformed. We do not know precisely how. "But some one will ask, 'How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?' You foolish man!" (1 Cor. 15.35-36). One who sees only a seed, a beginning of life, cannot grasp from that the splendor of what will be "And what you sow is not the body which is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as He has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body" (1 Cor. 15.37-38). But of this we are certain: "For this perishable body must put on imperishability and this mortal body must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15-53). Then shall we rejoice in the fulfillment of the ancient promises, and the last enemy, death, will be definitively conquered, "swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15.54; cf. Isa.25.8).

The death of a Christian is a sacred moment. Catholic funeral and burial rites are an integral aspect of our faith response to the mystery of life and death.

How we treat the body of a deceased member of our faith community mirrors our deep conviction that it is Christ who gives meaning to each of us individually, both in life and in death.



**"We firmly believe, and hence we hope that, just as Christ is truly risen from the dead and lives forever, so after death the righteous will live forever with the Risen Christ and He will raise them up on the last day."**



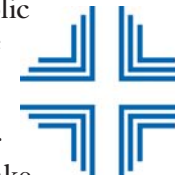
# THE CATHOLIC FUNERAL PLAN<sup>SM</sup> A Faith-Based Funeral Planning Alternative

Preservation of Catholic Rites and Traditions; Flexibility and Control are Hallmarks of Plan

It has now been more than six years since the Catholic Funeral Plan<sup>SM</sup> was first made available to Catholics in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. The plan was established in order to preserve, promote and protect Catholic funeral and burial traditions. The Catholic Funeral Plan<sup>SM</sup> addresses concerns which are unique to Catholics and not usually the focus of traditional funeral planning. The plan also provides consumers with protection from higher future funeral costs, and allows them to make changes to their plan without penalty should any of their funeral preferences, or the city in which they live, change. The flexibility of the plan is evidenced by the fact that those receiving the benefits of the plan have arranged funerals with almost 125 different funeral homes around the Diocese of Pittsburgh at the time of death. Under the plan the family maintains complete control of the funds until such time as the funeral services and merchandise have been provided. Only then is the funeral provider paid.

Since the plan was introduced thousands of people have enrolled in it and nearly 400 families have received the benefits of the plan at the time of the deaths of their loved ones. It has been at this time that the true value of the plan has been demonstrated. Appreciative families regularly write notes of thanks to the Catholic Funeral Plan<sup>SM</sup>. At the beginning of the year one such note was

received from a woman, who along with her husband, had enrolled in the plan five years earlier. Her husband had died just three weeks earlier and in her note she expressed her appreciation for the Catholic Funeral Plan<sup>SM</sup> and the people who had assisted her. "My sincere thanks to all those involved in the service for my husband, Earl. It is gratifying to know that others care so much. It does help ease the pain."



*The Catholic Funeral Plan<sup>SM</sup>*

Catholic families value the fact that someone from the plan is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to assist them when they experience a death. At the time of death, Catholic Funeral Plan<sup>SM</sup> personnel provide the family with compassionate assistance prior to their making final arrangements with the funeral home. The family is fully informed of all the funeral and burial wishes of the deceased, Catholic funeral and burial rites, and the funds available through the plan. Any funds in the plan which exceed the cost of the funeral are paid to the family.

Donna Mason, Catholic Funeral Plan<sup>SM</sup> Administrative Assistant, is the one who most frequently assists Catholic families when their loved ones die. She plays a very significant role in the delivery of this compassionate and outstanding service. Donna considers this her most important responsibility. She states, "Having the opportunity to work so closely with our families at a time when their world may seem to be falling apart is one of the most rewarding aspects of my position." This attitude of Donna's underscores the significant difference between the Catholic Funeral Plan<sup>SM</sup>, the faith-based funeral planning alternative, and other funeral plans.

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# Catholic Family Security Association, Inc.





## DEVELOPMENT Projects

Over the past year, The Catholic Cemeteries Association implemented various cemetery development projects that enhance the cemetery's appearance and provide additional burial options at the selected cemeteries.

A beautiful columbarium for cremated remains was installed at **Christ Our Redeemer Cemetery in Ross Township, PA.** The beautiful all granite structure will serve as a fitting base for a custom, imported, hand carved image depicting the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The statue is scheduled to be installed in the fall. Work also continues on site development for expansion of in-ground burial sections at Christ Our Redeemer Cemetery to meet the demand for additional space in the future.

A new Veterans Section is being developed at **Queen of Heaven Cemetery in McMurray, PA.** This new section will provide 2,005 gravesites for the interment of veterans and their immediate families. See the feature article on this new section honoring veterans.

Site development continues for future in-ground burial sites at **All Saints Cemetery located in Braddock Hills, PA.** Two new garden mausoleum buildings that were dedicated in recent years provide above-ground burial options for Catholic families who want to be buried in All Saints Cemetery.

*Following is an update on our current mausoleum projects.*



Holy Angels Chapel Mausoleum

Located in Resurrection Cemetery, Moon Township, Holy Angels Chapel Mausoleum was completed in 2002 and dedicated by Bishop Donald W. Wuerl on August 20, 2002. There are 2,607 spaces, including indoor chapel crypts and outdoor patio crypts.



Blessed Virgin Mary Garden Mausoleum

The Blessed Virgin Mary Garden Mausoleum in All Saints Cemetery, Braddock Hills, was blessed on April 6, 2003. Together with a twin building dedicated to the Sacred Heart, these projects provide 796 new crypts at this cemetery.



St. Matthew Garden Mausoleum

Construction on the St. Matthew Garden Mausoleum, Good Shepherd Cemetery, Monroeville, is now complete. Bishop William Winter blessed this newest mausoleum on October 2, 2004. The mausoleum includes 384 garden crypts and 96 niches for cremated remains.



Holy Savior Chapel Mausoleum

Construction on Phase One of this new chapel mausoleum began in the spring of 2004 and is now nearing completion. A stunning stained glass window will dominate the interior chapel space in this mausoleum. A dedication is scheduled for November 2005.



Holy Family Chapel Mausoleum

Holy Family Chapel mausoleum, located in St. Stanislaus Cemetery, Shaler Township, consists of 690 crypts. It was dedicated in March of 2003. A stained glass window has been installed depicting the life of the holy family. This beautiful space provides a fitting environment for committal services at the cemetery.



Mary, Mother of Christ Chapel Mausoleum

Mary, Mother of Christ Chapel Mausoleum, St. Joseph Cemetery, North Versailles, is currently being offered to Catholic families on a pre-construction basis. It will include a beautiful chapel and a total of 1,944 crypts.



Mary, Mother of the Church Chapel Mausoleum

Development work began on the new Mary, Mother of the Church Chapel Mausoleum to be built at Queen of Heaven Diocesan Cemetery in Peters Township. The new chapel mausoleum will consist of two phases providing 3,548 interior chapel crypts & exterior garden spaces. Niches for cremated remains will also be available.



Our Lady of Hope Chapel Mausoleum

Our Lady of Hope Chapel Mausoleum will be located in Our Lady of Hope Cemetery, Tarentum. Currently in the pre-construction phase, it will contain an impressive chapel and 679 crypt spaces when completed.



Our Lady of the Rosary Chapel Mausoleum

Construction on this mausoleum building located in Calvary Cemetery, Hazelwood, began in March of 2004. To date, one third of the 6,300 crypt spaces have been poured at the site. This mausoleum will consist of three stories with a balcony overlooking the receiving chapel.



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Chapel Mausoleum

This chapel mausoleum is located in Mt. Carmel Cemetery in Penn Hills. Completed only a few years ago, this mausoleum has been well received by Catholic families, requiring the acceleration of the second phase of the project. The chapel promotes prayer and meditation for the deceased entombed there.



Sacred Heart Chapel Mausoleum

This chapel mausoleum, located just inside the entrance to Sacred Heart Diocesan Cemetery, Monongahela, was dedicated in September of 2002 and consists of a total of 684 chapel and garden crypts. Much of the inventory in this mausoleum has been selected. Discussion for phase two of this project has begun.





## SPOTLIGHT ON CALVARY CEMETERY & Tom Wagner

Calvary Cemetery is the largest and most active of the fifteen diocesan cemeteries. The cemetery has 115 developed acres, with 5 miles of roads, and performs 900 burials/entombments per year.

The terrain and traditional upright monumentation within the cemetery pose special challenges in maintaining its appearance. The vast acreage, steep hills and many above-ground monuments require a unique blend of manpower and equipment for its care.

Calvary Cemetery has an impressive equipment pool - two backhoes, two dump trucks, 8 cutting tractors, 5 pickup trucks, 2 mid-duty utility vehicles, 12 trimmers, plus an assortment of other small motor equipment such as lawnmowers, snow blowers, backpack blowers, chainsaws, pruners, pressure washer, and power brush.

While the Central Maintenance facility of CCA is responsible for equipment repair on motorized vehicles throughout the association, the sheer size and complexity of the Calvary operation requires additional repair support at this site. This responsibility falls to Tom Wagner.

Tom began working at Calvary Cemetery as a part-time employee in 1976, becoming a member of the permanent full-time staff in 1980. His initial responsibilities involved general cemetery labor assignments, but evolved to that of a backhoe operator a few years later.

By the early 1990's Tom began to apply his mechanical ability in assisting with the maintenance of small motors and vehicles in the Calvary garage. His talent was recognized and CCA sent him to Rosedale Technical Institute for schooling on auto engines, and to Pitt Auto for small engine rebuilding. Now Tom performs all the mechanical work at Calvary on the tractors and small engine equipment, as well as most of the maintenance on the trucks.

An interesting facet of his responsibility is the support he provides for all the cemeteries with his small



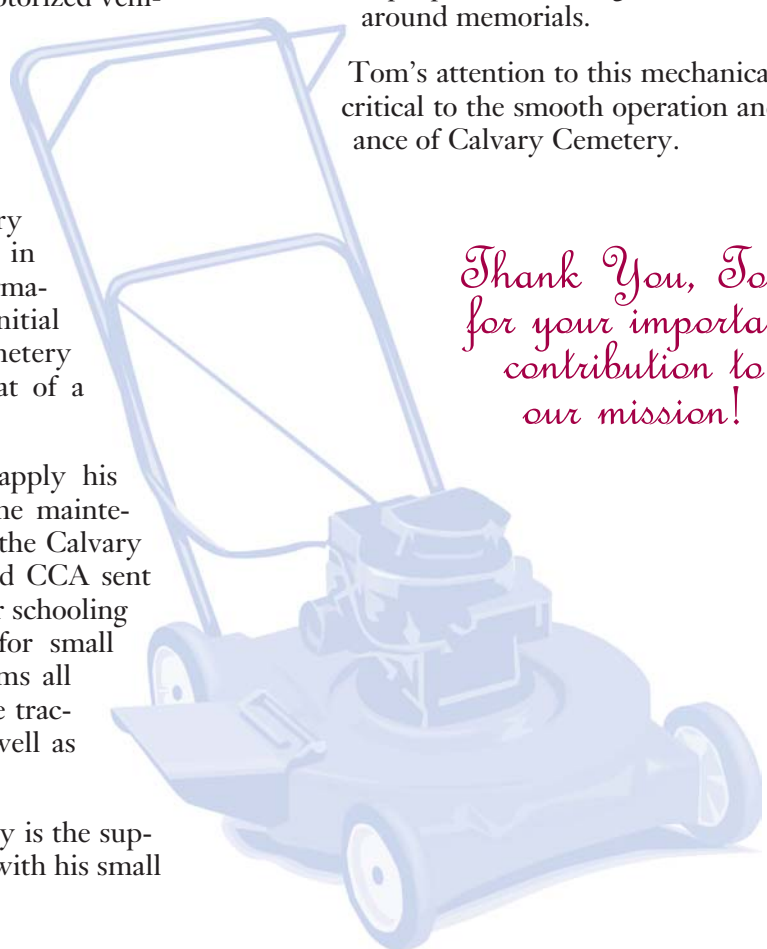
Tom Wagner, Mechanic at Calvary Cemetery

engine expertise. Any small motor equipment breakdown is sent to Tom. During the winter months, Tom systematically receives the trimmers (78 total)

from each cemetery and completely disassembles each one. He cleans and lubricates all moving parts, replaces the filter, cutting head, clutch, and (when needed) rebuilds the engine. This process is necessary because the trimmers are run continuously during the growing season, receiving more use in one season than a typical homeowner would demand in 10 years. While special maintenance of such a small piece of equipment may seem insignificant, it serves the purpose of allowing for careful trimming around memorials.

Tom's attention to this mechanical detail is critical to the smooth operation and appearance of Calvary Cemetery.

*Thank You, Tom, for your important contribution to our mission!*



## PARISH CEMETERY Services Department

The international Catholic Cemetery Conference held its second Small Cemetery Seminar in Pittsburgh on April 7 to 10 hosted by



CCA's Parish Cemetery Services Department. Cemeterians arrived from various states and dioceses, some of which were Illinois, Maine, West Virginia, New York, and as

far away as Tucson, Arizona. Among the topics presented were "Cemeteries, Monument Dealers and Legal Issues," "Critical Employment Issues," "OSHA Issues," "Mausoleum Concerns for the 21st Century," and "Proper Installation of Foundations," among other talks. A tour was conducted at Resurrection Cemetery, followed by a Mass celebrated at Holy Angels Chapel Mausoleum.

The speakers were excellent; and comments from the attendees indicated they were very impressed with the quality of the presentations. It was a very exciting and productive weekend for all in attendance.

## ABOUT CREMATION Did You Know?

The Catholic Church has officially allowed cremation since 1963. This change in church norms was incorporated into canon law in 1983, with the expectation that the body would be brought to church for the funeral liturgy, followed by cremation. Permission is sought from the parish priest and is granted on a case by case basis to assure that the practice is not chosen for reasons that are not compatible with Catholic teaching.

According to the Order of Christian Funerals, "The cremated remains of a body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come. This includes the use of a worthy vessel to contain the ashes, the manner in which they are carried, the care and attention to appropriate placement and transport, and the final disposition. The cremated remains should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium. The practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air, or on the ground, or keeping cremated remains in the home of a relative or friend of the deceased are not the reverent disposition that the Church requires." (p. 417)

*"The cremated remains of a body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come."*

## MT. CALVARY FEATURE INSTALLED At St. Joseph Cemetery

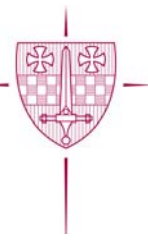
One of three central features scheduled to be installed in the Mt. Calvary lawn crypt section at St. Joseph Cemetery, North Versailles was completed over the winter. This feature consists of a granite columbarium for the inurnment of cremated remains, which serves as a fitting pedestal for an impressive 13 ft. tall granite cross. This feature can be seen from throughout the cemetery.



The columbarium is surrounded by benches installed on a decorative concrete walk. A long promenade, framed with flowering pear trees, stretches from the road to this central feature. The Stations of the Cross, consisting of beautiful bronze plaques installed on granite monuments, line the

promenade. Benches are installed in front of each Station allowing for prayer and meditation.

If you are in the neighborhood of St. Joseph Cemetery, we invite you to stop in to see this unique feature. It is already a source of great consolation to many who visit there!



## QUEEN OF HEAVEN CEMETERY To Honor Veterans

The Catholic Cemeteries Association has announced the development of a veterans section at Queen of Heaven Catholic Cemetery in the South Hills. Honorably discharged veterans will be entitled to a free burial space in the new veterans section. The spouse and immediate family members of the veteran may also acquire space and be buried with the veteran.

An impressive, custom designed veteran feature will be the focal point of the section. The memorial will recognize all the branches of the Armed Services and will have a memorial wall inscribed with names of the veterans interred there. The memorial will also have niche space available for the inurnment of cremated remains. The theme of the memorial will be Faith, Family and Country with artist etchings depicting this theme.



When asked about the development of the new veterans section, Annabelle McGannon, Executive Director of The Catholic Cemeteries Association, stated: "A veterans section at our Queen of Heaven Diocesan Cemetery is long overdue. We want to not only recognize the priceless contributions veterans have made to our country, but also the contributions these men and women have made to their Church and their family. This new section makes it possible for veterans to be buried with their loved ones and also receive the recognition and honor they deserve for their generous service to our country."

Development of the section began in April with the feature scheduled to be installed in fall of 2006. For additional information, contact Queen of Heaven Catholic Cemetery.



## HIGH TECH Office Records Management

The Catholic Cemeteries Association has been using computer technology for well over 15 years and, as many businesses do each year, the association must budget a certain amount of money to store the thousands of new records generated annually in the diocesan cemetery system.

Each year approximately 12,000 new sales contracts and service orders are written to document the activities in our cemeteries. The records representing one year's activity take up the space of six full size filing drawers. Each year, using the latest imaging technology, the prior year's paper records are electronically imaged onto four CD's. We currently have eight years worth of records, or approximately 100,000 documents stored on a desk top carousel. The CD's are much

more portable and provide the ability to make excellent copies on almost any desk top printer. This technology also insures that irreplaceable records are protected from accidental destruction.

The Catholic Cemeteries Association also stores the hard copies of paper records for between four and ten years, depending on the type of record. These records are preserved at an offsite storage facility managed by the Iron Mountain Records Storage Company. There are approximately 430 record boxes with old paper files stored at Iron Mountain Records Storage. These boxes can be retrieved within 24 hours.

Records of interments and entombments in our diocesan cemeteries are kept forever.

### CATHOLIC CEMETERIES ASSOCIATION

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