

Responsibilities of Catholic Cemeteries

The responsibilities of Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Washington DC in serving and administering the parish cemeteries may be defined as **Record Keeping, Sales, Burials and On Going Projects**. A more detailed description is given below.

Record Keeping

1. Maintain Permanent records. Maintain and update maps, corresponding map books, Lot and owner cards, contracts, written communications and computer database to reflect all transactions/interactions with community.
2. Transfer of burial rights. Coordinate the transfer of burial right to heirs or designated recipient and resolve claims of inheritance or right of burial.
3. Research family lots. Determine the boundaries of the lot, individual burials and if any sites are available for additional burials.
4. Research old burials. Inspect records and physically check the cemetery for burials to satisfy claims of ownership and genealogical requests.
5. Insurance. Obtain and ensure all contractors (monument dealers) are properly insured and maintain file of current certificates.
6. Provide support documents. 25 legal documents including contracts, rules and regulations and other documents necessary for daily operation.
7. Provide support materials. Provide office supplies, mailings, computers and cemetery database.
8. Endowment Fund. Maintain the endowment fund for the parish providing quarterly reports for the parish and diocese.
9. Md. Cemetery Oversight Committee Handle communications and any issues of compliance with the state board that regulates Maryland cemeteries.

Sales

1. Meetings. Arrange appointments with families to show and sell available property. Also to meet with families to answer any questions they may have regarding the cemetery.
2. Billing. Make payment arrangements and monthly billing statements for accounts receivable. For profit cemeteries require payment in full or charge interest on accounts receivable. CCAW allows families to pay on time interest and tax free.

Burials

1. Meetings. Meet with families to identify or sell burial site, make arrangement for payment and have *Authorization Form* signed to protect the parish and diocese from liability. Also, to resolve any problems that may arise at such time.

2. Verify availability. Physically probe the site to determine the space does not have an existing burial or a conflicting claim of burial right.
3. Open and close sight. Dig and close the sight making certain not to damage the grounds and repairing any tire marks. Also disposal of excess soil.
4. Represent the Church. Have a representative of this office present on date of burial to conduct the funeral upon arriving in the cemetery and to handle problems that may arise such as adverse weather.
5. File state records. Complete and file the burial transit permit with the state.
6. Remove Funeral Flowers. Remove and dispose of floral arrangements that were brought to the cemetery on the day of burial, usually two weeks after funeral date.
7. Seeding. Compress the earth to prevent sinking, apply three inches of topsoil on the site and plant grass seed.
8. Interment record. Complete and maintain a thorough interment record on all burials through paper documents and database; see attached sample.

On-going Projects

1. Arbitration. Resolve conflicts that arise from claims of inheritance or right of burial utilizing legal counsel if necessary.
2. Enforce Rules and Regulations. Enforce compliance with the rules of the cemetery such as removal of unauthorized trees or glass containers.
3. Consultation and assistance. Provide guidance and assistance with special projects such as cemetery expansion, placing signs, road repair or columbaria.
4. Memorial installation. Inspect memorial applications from outside monument dealers and make certain the memorial complies with the specific cemetery's rules. Stake the exact location for the memorial to be placed. Inspect the final installed product to ensure compliance and that the cemetery was not damaged in the installation.
5. Collection and distribution of funds. Collect and distribute funds due the church and its Endowment Care Fund from lot sales and monument endowment fund fees.
6. Memorial repair. Reset and repair monuments that have sunken, tipped or are loose from their base.
7. Grave maintenance. Repair any graves that have sunken or require reseeding.