

## At the Resurrection Chapel Mausoleum

### *A lasting tribute to a beloved wife, for all to share*

Over the past three years, rarely a week has gone by that Antonio “Tony” Pilla has not stopped by the Chapel Mausoleum at Resurrection Cemetery to say his prayers and visit the crypt of his wife, the late Bonnie Pilla.



**Tony Pilla**

Chapel Mausoleum offer him great comfort.

“This was her planning that we be buried here. It’s a place where I am still married to Bonnie. I feel close to her and I don’t want her to be alone,” he said.

Soon after her passing, Tony commissioned a memorial bench in tribute to his wife outside the front door of the mausoleum and also had two linden trees planted across the roadway. He also had his parents moved from Calvary Cemetery to Resurrection, where Bonnie’s mother and Tony’s brother are also interred.

But he wanted to do more, something that would reflect his wife’s great love of animals, her special connection to them and her enduring spirit.

“Bonnie could talk to any animal. She grew up on a farm and just had a way with them. She was a very caring and kind person,” he said. “She was always helping people and stood up for the underdog. She always stuck with me even when times were tough. She was a wonderful wife — we had a great marriage.”

Tony brought his ideas to The Catholic Cemeteries, and the result is the beginnings of a special memorial garden on the Mausoleum’s south side.

In March 2007, Bonnie passed away suddenly, just 15 days after being diagnosed with cancer. The Pillas had been married 57 years.

Two years earlier, at Bonnie’s insistence, the couple had purchased interment spaces at the soon-to-be constructed mausoleum. Now, Tony’s regular visits to the

The centerpiece is a bronze statue of an angel holding a butterfly, donated by Tony. It is a replica of the Angel of the Resurrection at Gethsemane Cemetery’s Children’s Memorial and Prayer Garden, created by Italian sculptor Guido Mariani.

Plans call for the addition of a low granite wall surrounding the half-circle patio, along with benches and plantings. Focal points will be two granite monuments with bronze plaques commissioned by Tony. One is an etching of Bonnie with some of her beloved pets; the other a depiction of the Bible verse Isaiah 11:6: “*The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.*”

Catholic Cemeteries director John Cherek said donors are needed to help complete the mausoleum garden, which can be seen from inside the mausoleum through the rear glass doors. “We are grateful to Tony for his generosity in initiating this new place for prayer and remembrance at Resurrection.”

Tony Pilla calls the statue and monuments “just the beginning of the garden. I want it to be a place for everyone to enjoy. I hope others will join me in making this a reality.”

*To learn more, contact The Catholic Cemeteries office at 651-228-9991.*

**Tony Pilla examines the new bronze statue behind the Resurrection Chapel Mausoleum. At right is a plaque dedicated to his late wife, Bonnie, that will be part of the new garden.**



### Blessing scheduled for Memorial Day 2010

Archbishop Harry J. Flynn will bless the Resurrection Chapel Mausoleum’s new statue and bronze plaques at a dedication on Memorial Day, May 31, following the 10 a.m. Mass. All are invited to attend. The statue and plaques are gifts of Antonio “Tony” Pilla in memory of his wife Bonnie.

In addition, two new plaques at the entrance of the office building at Resurrection Cemetery will be unveiled by the Archbishop on Memorial Day. The office building has been renamed in his honor — the Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Center. The plaques were also donated by Mr. Pilla.



# Cemetery genealogist helps fill out family histories

*As office manager for two historic cemeteries — Calvary Cemetery in St. Paul and St. Mary's Cemetery in Minneapolis — Linda Radtke assists grieving families through the process of burial of loved ones. But she plays another significant role for The Catholic Cemeteries — that of resident historian and genealogist. Each year, Radtke helps many family historians locate information about relatives who may be buried in one of the archdiocesan cemeteries. In an interview, she answered questions about this aspect of her work. Radtke worked in the corporate world before joining The Catholic Cemeteries in 1999. She holds a master's degree in theological studies.*

## What is the cemetery's role in genealogy research?

We're here as record-keepers and caretakers of family records; it's a role we take very seriously. However, handling burials in our cemeteries is our number one priority, and so our attention goes to those first. That's why it's important to call our office or email me before coming to the cemetery, to be sure I will be available to provide assistance.



Linda Radtke

## When people contact you, what are they looking for?

There's a very common misconception that cemetery records contain much more information than they actually do. What we do have is very basic — name, date of burial, age and location of the grave. If the burial is on a family lot, we have the names of other family members although not necessarily the relationships. We don't have death certificates, obituaries, birth and death dates, or the church someone attended. Sometimes the grave markers have additional information, such as dates of birth and death or the spouse's name, so I encourage people to locate and visit the gravesite. It's also important to remember that our older records may not be completely accurate. They aren't legal documents.

## What kind of assistance can people expect?

If a person is looking for one or two individuals, I can search the records immediately on their behalf. However, for larger searches, people are welcome to call and set a time to come into the office at Calvary and review the record books themselves. If they are out-of-state, they can email me the list of names and I will do the search for them as I have time.

## What kinds of people do you assist with their family histories?

Many retired people come here working on their family tree. They have time and they want to leave a legacy to future generations in their family. I hear so many people say, "I wish I would have asked more questions of my relatives when they were alive." For example, they know Grandma had three brothers but what were their names? Or there was a 'black sheep' in the family that no one ever talked about, or things that were taboo to talk about generations ago. Now they're trying to fill in the blanks of their family history. We also get calls from parents of elementary-school children, usually 4th-, 5th- or 6th-graders. The children have been assigned a class project to research their ancestry and they call us for information.

## How did you get interested in this kind of work?

I've been doing genealogy myself for almost 20 years. I love discovering more about my family history. In my own searches, I've been on the receiving end of people going above and beyond the call to help me get information. So I try to do the same for those contacting The Catholic Cemeteries. I love working here and helping families in times of grief as well as in genealogy searches. It's my calling.

## TO REQUEST GENEALOGICAL ASSISTANCE...

- Email your request if possible. Radtke can be reached at [linda@catholic-cemeteries.org](mailto:linda@catholic-cemeteries.org). Or call her at 651-488-8866.
- Provide as much identifying information as you have about the individual(s) being researched.
- The information available from cemetery records is limited to the following: name, date of burial, age and location of the grave.
- If you have requested assistance, please be patient. "Burials are our first priority and so there are times when we are very busy. But be assured that I will respond to every inquiry."

A woman in her 70s came into Calvary's office and wondered if there was a burial record of her baby who died at birth some 50 years ago. At that time, it was common for the mother to never see the infant and for families not to openly acknowledge the loss.

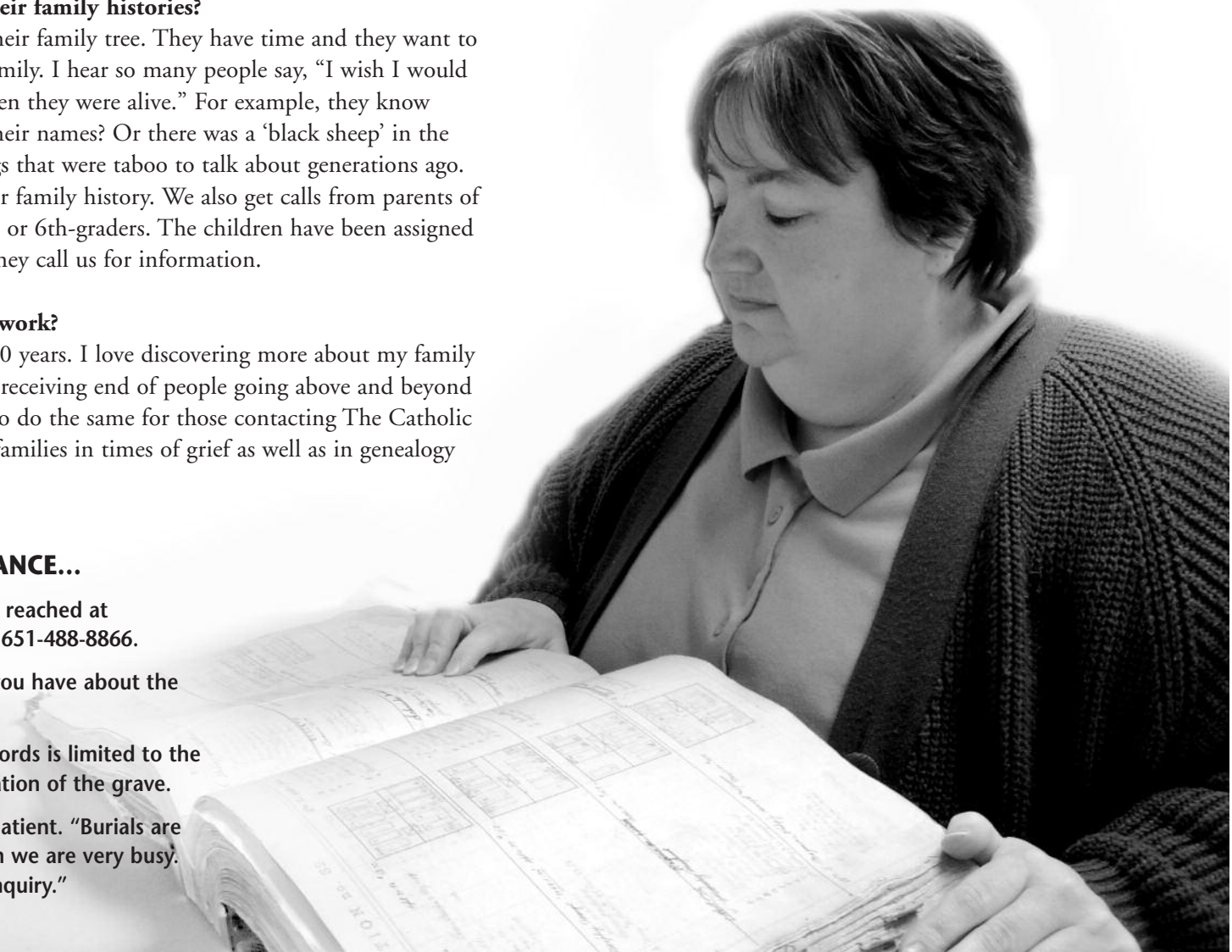
Linda Radtke searched the records and found the location in an unmarked grave at Calvary. "This woman had been grieving for decades and had never been able to talk about the loss. It meant a great deal to her to find the grave, and it meant a lot to me to be able to help her. This is part of our mission," Radtke said.



A man in Ireland wrote to the Archdiocese looking for a relative who had immigrated to the United States in the early part of the 20th century. All he knew was that the man had settled in St. Paul, but whatever became of him, no one in the family knew. "Eventually the letter got to me. I was able to find a record that he was buried with his family at Calvary. We wrote back and received a thank you letter from the man. He was very grateful for the information," Radtke said.



A gentleman was researching Civil War veterans buried in Calvary Cemetery. As with many people interested in historical figures, he wanted to pay his respects to those who had served in the military. When he found out that one veteran's wife was buried in an unmarked grave, he and a group of historical re-enactors raised the funds for a simple marker.



# Updates...

## New Bronze Memory Light now available

In recent years, candles or lights have been placed on some gravesites. In most cases, these lights pose hazards to the movement of cemetery equipment and are not allowed under cemetery rules.

Recognizing the significance of "light" to many bereaved family members, The Catholic Cemeteries is now offering a product that is attractive, safe, constructed of a permanent material, and is able to be moved if necessary for equipment purposes. The Bronze Memory Light is interchangeable with the bronze Grecian and Doric flower vases currently sold in the cemeteries. The light fits onto the vase base and can be inverted into the ground.



The light comes with a wax candle and, after burning down, can be replaced with any wax candle that will fit the light insert. Or an inexpensive flickering, battery-operated candle can be purchased. The Bronze Memory Light has a lifetime guarantee from the Mathews Bronze Company.

Information about the Bronze Memory Light and a display unit are available in the cemetery offices at Gethsemane and Resurrection.

## Living with Grief teleconference focuses on end-of-life care

On March 24, The Catholic Cemeteries sponsored and hosted the viewing of the annual Hospice Foundation Living with Grief teleconference at St. Raphael's in Crystal, on the topic of cancer and end-of-life care. Approximately 40 individuals participated, including parish nurses, social workers, pastoral ministers, deacons and priests. The teleconference included a panel discussion of experts, interspersed with individuals telling of their own experiences. Professionals in attendance were also able to participate in a follow-up discussion that fulfills continuing education requirements. The 2011 topic will be especially helpful for those in ministry: "Spirituality at Life's End" and will be held on April 13, 2011. If you are interested in receiving further information as it becomes available, call The Catholic Cemeteries office, 651-228-9991.

## Storm sewer work taking place at St. Mary's Cemetery

The City of Minneapolis notified St. Mary's Cemetery that its storm sewer, located on the 14th Avenue side of the cemetery, is connected to the sanitation sewer of the city. As a result this decades old sewer is no longer compliant with current regulations. The Catholic Cemeteries is required to purchase a license from the city to authorize the disconnection of the sewer by an approved contractor. The license has been granted and bids are now being received to cap off the connection on both ends and fill the pipe works with concrete. Work will probably begin in July. There is no anticipated disruption to cemetery operations but visitors may notice this activity on the east side of the cemetery.

## Enhancements to Cremation Garden at Gethsemane

As the inventory of cremation niches in the Gethsemane Chapel Mausoleum decreases, the first of several columbarium structures will be constructed in the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary Cremation Garden. A columbarium is a free-standing bank of niches for the interment of cremated remains.

The columbarium, presently being sold at special pre-construction prices, will be situated on the outer perimeter of the garden near the pathway. The unit will be 10 niches wide by 3 niches high, providing for the interment of 30 persons. It will be constructed of carnelian and moonlight gray granite. Construction is expected to begin in late summer. The columbarium will be complemented by the new plantings of trees, shrubs, and mulch added last fall.

The Garden's bronze plaques, installed on the circular stone walls, will be replaced this summer due to discoloration from an accumulation of calcium on the plaque surface, a result of well water in the cemetery irrigation system. In working with the Mathews Bronze Company, the plaques have been redesigned to allow run-off and address this problem. Families will be notified when the new plaques, being replaced at no charge, are installed.

## Cemeteries prepare for the emerald ash borer

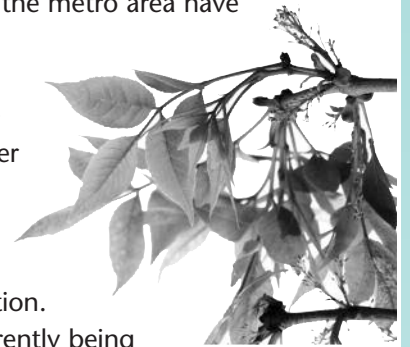
A few years ago no one would have known what an emerald ash borer is. Now, the pesky and destructive bug from Asia, is making its home in Minnesota, after decimating the population of ash trees in Michigan and parts

of Wisconsin. The borer has already been found in St. Paul.

Arborists in the metro area have begun to educate the public about the emerald ash borer and propose options to deal with the potential infestation.

One option, currently being employed in the City of St. Paul, is to cut down all ash trees. The other option is more remedial in that each ash tree is chemically treated with an IV-like injection to inoculate it against the borer.

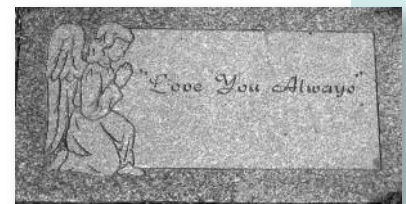
The Catholic Cemeteries has chosen the latter option and will begin inoculating its ash trees during the coming active growing season. The process has begun by identifying our ash tree population; fortunately, in our cemeteries we have a diverse selection of trees, having learned from the rampage of Dutch Elm disease in our older cemeteries. In early summer, the injection phase will start tree by tree. Arborists are suggesting that to maintain immunity, the trees will need an injection every three to four years. If you are visiting one of our cemeteries in the coming months, don't be surprised by the tree IV apparatus. Trees need their shots too!



## Markers added to special gravesites

The Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Compassionate Assistance Fund supports The Catholic Cemeteries' ministry to bereaved families who have lost children by miscarriage or other reasons prior to birth. As part of this ministry, The Catholic Cemeteries provides burial of fetal remains in the Children's Section at Resurrection Cemetery and hosts funeral and committal services for families. Recently, the Fund helped underwrite a grave marker for one of these special gravesites; more donations are needed since four markers are needed each year for this program.

To make a tax-deductible gift to the Fund, send your check, made out to The Catholic Cemeteries, to: The Catholic Cemeteries, 2105 Lexington Ave. S., Mendota Heights, MN 55120.





THE CATHOLIC CEMETERIES OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

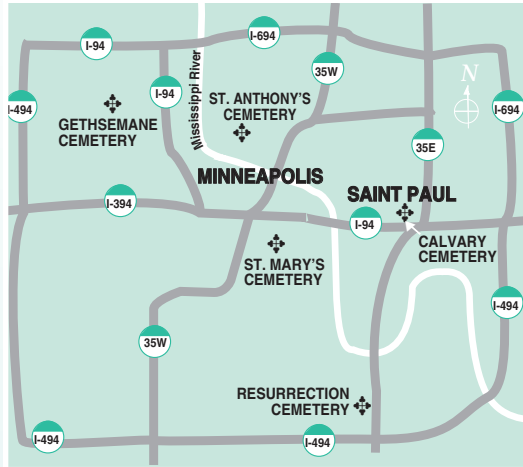
**CALVARY CEMETERY**  
753 Front Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55103  
651-488-8866

**GETHEMANE CEMETERY**  
8151 42nd Avenue N.  
New Hope, MN 55427  
763-537-4184

**RESURRECTION CEMETERY**  
2101 Lexington Ave. S.  
Mendota Heights, MN 55120  
651-454-5072

**ST. ANTHONY'S CEMETERY**  
2729 Central Avenue NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55418  
763-537-4184

**ST. MARY'S CEMETERY**  
4403 Chicago Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
651-488-8866



VISIT US ON THE WEB AT  
[www.catholic-cemeteries.org](http://www.catholic-cemeteries.org)



2105 Lexington Ave. S.  
Mendota Heights, MN 55120

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non Profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Minneapolis, MN  
Permit No. 3844

## Gentleman's resting place assured with the Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Compassionate Assistance Fund

A gentleman without family or assets was given a dignified burial at Calvary Cemetery this winter with the help of Bradshaw Funeral Homes and The Catholic Cemeteries.

Both organizations share a commitment to provide funeral and burial services for indigent individuals whenever possible.

A funeral service was held at Union Gospel Mission where the man had received social services. Bradshaw Funeral Homes handled the related costs. He was buried at Calvary in a grave that had been donated by a cemetery property owner. In cases such as this, the county of residence makes partial payment for the costs associated with burial, and the balance is covered by donations to the Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Compassionate Assistance Fund.

"It is part of our mission to provide a sacred resting place for all who believe in the Resurrection of the Lord, no matter what their economic status. We are pleased to partner with Bradshaw Funeral Homes in situations like this," said John Cherek, director of The Catholic Cemeteries. "The Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Compassionate Assistance Fund is a vital resource to help us respond to these requests, and we appreciate the generosity of donors who make this possible with their gifts."

Jim Fleischaker of South St. Paul, a barber who had befriended the man while providing free haircuts at the Union Gospel Mission, said the man, whose name was Jimmy, was a dishwasher who died suddenly of a heart attack at age 57.

"Many people stepped forward to help Jimmy both while he was alive and after his death," Fleischaker said.

"I remember him saying to me, 'Nobody recognizes a lowly dishwasher.' I told him, 'Jimmy, you're wrong. God recognizes your work. He sends people to help,'" Fleischaker said. "After Jimmy died, it touched my heart to see the funeral and burial services that were donated."

To make a tax-deductible gift to the Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Compassionate Assistance Fund, send your check, made out to The Catholic Cemeteries, to: The Catholic Cemeteries, 2105 Lexington Ave. S., Mendota Heights, MN 55120.



## Join us on Memorial Day, May 31, 2010

Memorial Day Mass will be celebrated at each cemetery at 10 a.m. on Monday, May 31. Please plan to stay for refreshments at the conclusion of Mass.

**In the event of rain, Mass will be at 10 a.m. at the churches listed below:**

**ST. MARY'S CEMETERY**  
Church of the Holy Name  
3637 11th Ave. S., Minneapolis

**ST. ANTHONY'S CEMETERY**  
Church of St. Clement  
911 24th Ave. N.E., Minneapolis

**Mass will be held RAIN OR SHINE at:**

**GETHEMANE CEMETERY**  
8151 42nd Ave. N., New Hope

**RESURRECTION CEMETERY**  
2101 Lexington Ave. S., Mendota Heights

**CALVARY CEMETERY**  
753 Front Ave., St. Paul

## Office Hours on Memorial Day Weekend

During the Memorial Day weekend, each Cemetery office has extended hours as follows:

Saturday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Sunday: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Monday: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

## Grave Decorations for Memorial Day

During the days before and after Memorial Day, artificial flowers, potted plants, decorations or other ornaments are allowed. These types of decorations can be placed on graves beginning at noon on Thursday, May 27, and remain there until Sunday, June 6. Decorations should be removed by this date; otherwise, the cemetery staff will begin pickup on Monday, June 7. After that time, we request fresh-cut flowers only during the growing season.

## CEMETERY HOURS

Every day of the year, cemetery grounds are open from 8 a.m. to dusk (generally 5 p.m. in the winter). All cemetery offices are normally open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on Saturday, 8 a.m. to noon at Resurrection and Gethsemane.



Heritage

is published by  
The Catholic Cemeteries  
of the Archdiocese  
of Saint Paul and  
Minneapolis,  
2105 Lexington Ave. S.,  
Mendota Heights,  
MN 55120,  
651-228-9991,  
John Cherek, Director.