

# HERITAGE

*A newsletter for friends of The Catholic Cemeteries*



Dignitaries including Secretary of State Mark Ritchie (third from right) stood at attention following the dedication of Pvt. Sampare's grave stone.

## At Calvary Cemetery Honoring one soldier, remembering all

The Calvary Cemetery grave of Pvt. Edmund Sampare, a Union soldier and sharpshooter from St. Paul killed at the Battle of Antietam in 1862, was rededicated on September 22 at a special event commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

More than 50 people paused as a new stone marker in memory of the fallen soldier was unveiled by Civil War re-enactors as part of a ceremony remembering all Minnesotans who died on the Antietam battlefield on September 17, 1862. It was the single bloodiest day of battle in American history, with some 23,000 casualties on both sides of the conflict.

The Calvary event was co-sponsored by the Minnesota Civil War Commemorative Task Force and The Catholic Cemeteries as part of a series of ceremonies to honor the participation of Minnesota Civil War soldiers by dedicating the graves of comrades who died and were returned for burial to Minnesota.


The program included comments by Mark Ritchie, Minnesota Secretary of State and task force co-chair, along with presentations by several area historians. Dr. Joseph FitzHarris, professor emeritus of the University of St. Thomas, spoke on the place of Antietam in Civil War history. Stephen Osman, former site director of Historic Fort Snelling, talked about the role of the U.S. Sharpshooters, of which Pvt. Sampare was a member. Jeff Williams of the Civil War Commemoration Task Force discussed the actions of the First Minnesota Regiment at Antietam.

Before the grave rededication, the Honorable Judge LaJune Lange read the Emancipation Proclamation. A reading of the names of all Minnesota soldiers killed at Antietam, a rifle salute and taps concluded the event.

Approximately 25,000 Minnesotans fought for the Union during the war. About 800 died, with 400 having known gravesites, according to Ken Flies, coordinator of the Soldier Recognition Sub-Committee of the Commemorative Task Force.

Of those 400, only 18 were returned to Minnesota for burial, said Flies, who has conducted research into the location of the graves.

In Sampare's case, Flies worked closely with Linda Radtke of Calvary Cemetery. They found a burial record for the soldier but couldn't locate the grave. It turned out that some time after 1940, Sampare's marble and limestone upright headstone had been laid down flat in order to protect the marble from further erosion from the elements. Over the years, the marker settled and became overgrown making it difficult to find. Flies finally located the marker, now replaced with the new monument.

"It is important for us to remember the sacrifice made by soldiers like Pvt. Sampare," said John Cherek, director of The Catholic Cemeteries. "We are grateful to the Minnesota Civil War Commemorative Task Force for helping make this grave restoration and event possible." 



## "We are beneficiaries of their gift..."


By Mark Ritchie  
Minnesota Secretary of State  
Co-Chair, Minnesota Civil War  
Commemorative Task Force

In commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Civil War here in Minnesota, we recognize the importance of connecting Minnesotans of today with those who sacrificed so much in that long-ago conflict — those who died in action, those who were wounded, those who returned home to contribute to the building of our state.



Mark Ritchie

By honoring the brave men buried in these places, we not only pay tribute to our ancestors but to the collective contribution and sacrifice of the entire community in that time of strife. The rededication of a gravesite and gravestone, while specifically honoring of an individual soldier, is a sacred act of commemoration for all who served on behalf of our state. We pause to look back, reflect and express our gratitude.

We are so fortunate to have historic cemeteries like Calvary. Those who created these vital places of remembrance for our loved ones so long ago made an invaluable investment in the future. We are all beneficiaries of their gift. Each cemetery connects us to our history, offering us the wisdom we need to act responsibly in today's world. It reminds us of our duty to be good stewards of these places and to invest in our collective history as our forbearers did so long ago. 

# 64 markers being replaced through the Adopt-A-Marker campaign

The deteriorating gravestones marking the graves of 42 pioneering priests at Calvary Cemetery and 22 at St. Mary's Cemetery are being replaced thanks to the generous financial support of many individuals and families, Knights of Columbus Councils, and nearly 30 archdiocesan parishes. Plans are also underway to restore markers of nuns from certain religious orders at both cemeteries.

Sunburst Memorials of St. Cloud, the supplier of granite memorials sold by The Catholic Cemeteries, will manufacture the markers this winter and The Catholic Cemeteries will install them at no cost.

Fr. Kevin McDonough, pastor of St. Peter Claver Parish in St. Paul and Sagrado Corazon de Jesus in Minneapolis, who spearheaded this fund drive, expressed his gratitude to all those who joined in the cause to preserve the memory of these early builders of the Archdiocese.

"It is quite remarkable how the Catholic community rallied together to ensure that generations to come will never forget the service that these priests gave to this Archdiocese in its earliest years," he said. 🌳

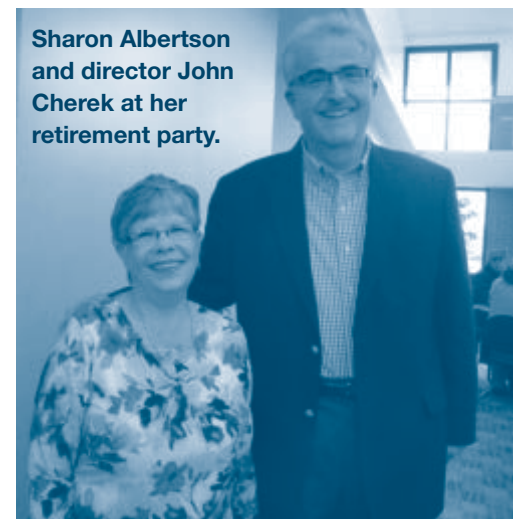


*A blessing of the new markers and dedication prayer are scheduled for Memorial Day, May 27, 2013 at both Calvary Cemetery and St. Mary's Cemetery.*

## *Thank you to the following donors to the Adopt-A-Marker campaign.*

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Sharon Albertson and director John Cherek at her retirement party.



## Long-time staff member retires

**Sharon Albertson, administrative assistant at The Catholic Cemeteries since 1987, retired in October.**

**Albertson handled many tasks over 25 years, including responding to inquiries about cemetery-related matters from families, parishes and archdiocesan parish cemeteries. "It's been a wonderful opportunity for me to work with so many people," she said. "I really enjoyed working here and found it to be a very fulfilling experience."**

**The Catholic Cemeteries welcomes Emily Gorman, who recently joined the staff as Albertson's replacement.**

## Staff Profile

### Mike Gray: A jack-of-all-trades and more...

**Mike Gray** does a lot of everything at Resurrection Cemetery. Or as he puts it, "I'm a jack-of-all-trades here."

A member of the staff of The Catholic Cemeteries since 2005, Gray oversees the seasonal field staff in the maintenance of cemetery grounds and assorted field duties. He's a skilled mechanic who keeps the cemetery equipment serviced and operational. And of course, he handles the opening and closing of graves.

While his day-to-day work is largely physical, Gray sees it as much more.

"When I started this job, I began meeting the people we serve and it became clear that this is a ministry," Gray said. "We are here with people at times of great sorrow and sadness and I realized the importance of our presence."

The preparation of a grave for burial — locating the site, digging the space, putting up the tent and related tasks — is sacred work, Gray says.

"I think of each burial as if it were for my mother or father," he said, "because I know the person to be buried is loved by many. This is a very fulfilling job."

Whether standing by at burial services or doing daily fieldwork, Gray has come to know many families at Resurrection. For example, Joe O'Neill, whose late wife Nancy is buried at Resurrection, visits

regularly and appreciates Gray's friendliness and attentive care.

"What a wonderful dedicated employee Michael is for the many myriad of descendant survivors who, like our family, have experienced the reverential devotion and support of your outstanding employee," O'Neill recently wrote.

Gray's spare time is filled with family, faith and powerlifting — the strong man can bench press more than 400 pounds!

Several years ago, after his pastor was diagnosed with cancer, Gray helped start a competitive powerlifting benefit, called Relentless, drawing weightlifters from across the country. The event was such a success that it is now held annually and supports HopeKids, which offers support to children with life-threatening medical conditions.

"Mike gives a lot of himself to his job and his community. He is a real asset to our team at Resurrection," said John Cherek, director of The Catholic Cemeteries. 🌳



Resurrection field worker Mike Gray.



## Peaceable Kingdom Garden dedicated

On September 22, Archbishop Emeritus Harry J. Flynn presided at Mass and blessed the new Peaceable Kingdom Garden outside the Chapel Mausoleum at Resurrection Cemetery. More than 75 people attended the event dedicating the garden, which will serve as a place of prayer and remembrance for visitors.

Special thanks go to Tony Pilla, who spearheaded the garden's development in memory of his late wife, Bonnie. In addition, sincere appreciation goes to the following donors to the Peaceable Kingdom Garden:

Ms. Betty Berg	Mr. Robert E. Loida
Ms. JoLynn M. Blaeser	Miss Lorraine D. Michaels
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### Remembering a beloved child: A special opportunity

**The Children's Memorial and Prayer Garden at Gethsemane Cemetery offers a special way for bereaved families to memorialize a beloved child. Paving bricks that border the walkway leading to the Memorial are available for inscription of the child's name and years of birth and death. A contribution of \$250 covers the cost of the memorial brick and inscription and supports the endowment for the care and maintenance of the Memorial, which was dedicated in 2008. For more information, please call 651-228-9991.**



## Updates

### Special Masses to be held in December

Masses of remembrance will be celebrated at Gethsemane Cemetery and Resurrection Cemetery in the chapel mausoleums on Saturday, December 8, 2012. Invitations are being sent out to the newly bereaved. For more information, contact the respective cemetery office at Gethsemane or Resurrection, or visit our web site's upcoming events page.

### Columbaria are being added at three cemeteries

A fifth new cremation burial unit will soon be added to the cremation garden at Gethsemane Cemetery. Future plans include the addition of one to two columbaria per year in this garden. For more information, contact Jules Bobst, family service counselor, at 763-537-4184.

At Resurrection Cemetery, a new 120-niche unit will soon be constructed on an interior wall of Resurrection's original mausoleum, with planning underway for a companion unit on the opposite side of the building. For more information, contact Tracy Flanagan or Dean Lensing, family service counselors, at 651-454-5072.

Calvary Cemetery also has plans for the addition of a columbarium unit to be located near the five garden mausoleums at the cemetery's Victoria Street Entrance. Preconstruction sales are scheduled to begin in early spring 2013. For more information, contact Michael LaBelle, family service counselor, at 651-488-8866.



An architect's drawing of the new columbarium planned for Calvary Cemetery.

### New graves available at Calvary

Approximately 60 new grave spaces are now available for sale in Section 13 B of Calvary Cemetery. These recently laid-out graves complete a vacated roadway within view of Front Street near the Jameson Street entrance. Both monument and non-monument graves are for sale in this section. If you are interested in purchasing at this historic cemetery, where new space is at a premium, please contact Michael LaBelle, family service counselor, at 651-488-8866.

### Calvary joins the "bluebird trail"

Under the leadership of Calvary Cemetery volunteer Lisa McIntire, Calvary is now participating in the Bluebird Trail Network. In 2011, bluebird trail volunteers set up 10 bluebird nest boxes in the cemetery. By spring 2012, 20 new bluebirds were found in the nest boxes, according to McIntire, adding that it is rare for a new trail to have so many nests in its first year. "Calvary must provide a quality habitat to support the return of bluebirds to urban neighborhoods. We are so blessed by this excellent success," she said.

### St. Agnes students clean religious graves

In October, the eighth-grade confirmation class from St. Agnes School raked leaves and cleaned around the markers of the sisters, priests, bishops and archbishops at historic Calvary Cemetery. Students also had the opportunity to do a rubbing of a marker of one person for whom they will pray for during the next year.



# HERITAGE



THE  
**CATHOLIC  
CEMETERIES**  
*The Archdiocese of  
Saint Paul and Minneapolis*

2105 Lexington Ave. S.  
Mendota Heights, MN 55120

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John Cherek, Director

## 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, 9 a.m. to noon at Resurrection and Gethsemane.

## The Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis

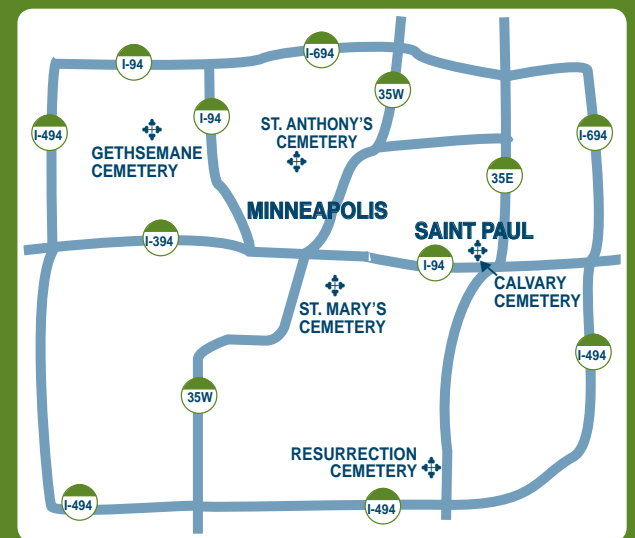
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## Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Compassionate Assistance Fund

### “An angel helped us through this...”

With help from generous donors to the **Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Compassionate Assistance Fund**, the stepmother of Deacon Nao Kao Yang was laid to rest near relatives at Resurrection Cemetery following her death last March in Madison, WI where she had lived for many years.

“It was very important to us that Song Lee be buried at Resurrection alongside other families members in the Hmong section,” said Deacon Yang, who serves the St. Vincent de Paul Campus of the Cathedral of St. Paul, which ministers to the Twin Cities Hmong community. “But the costs were large, and we could not handle the financial burden.”

Father Joseph Johnson, former rector of the Cathedral of Saint Paul, and Dan Delmore and his associates of Gearty-Delmore Funeral Chapels helped Deacon Yang and his wife Mai with the many steps involved, including having Song Lee's body transferred to Minnesota and handling funeral arrangements and the service. The Catholic Cemeteries covered the costs of a gravesite and burial in Resurrection's Hmong section.

“An angel was there to help us through this,” said Mai Yang. “We are so grateful for all the help and support we received. Without it, Song Lee would have been buried all alone far away.”



**Deacon Nao Kao Yang and his wife, Mai.**

In their ministry, Mai Yang said she and her husband are teaching their faith community about the important role of Catholic burial at a Catholic cemetery. “The Catholic cemetery is here for the living but it is also a home for the soul of the person who has passed on. We live our life as Catholics even in death.”

Donations to the Compassionate Assistance Fund are used to cover the associated costs of burial for those whose families are unable to pay for burial services. It also supports The Catholic Cemeteries' ministry to bereaved families who have lost children by miscarriage or other reasons prior to birth.

**To make a gift, call 651-228-9991.** 

## In Appreciation

**Our thanks** go to those listed below for gifts given to the donor funds of The Catholic Cemeteries — John Ireland Memorial Fund, Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Compassionate Assistance Fund, and Children's Memorials and Healing Gardens — between October 1, 2011, and September 30, 2012.

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