THE CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

HERITAGE

FALL / WINTER 2017

A newsletter for friends of The Catholic Cemeteries

Cemeteries align us with that which is greater than a single life

"Not to celebrate the snowflake, but the snowflake falling in the river."

"Place is one of the things that makes us human, that makes us larger than ourselves."

So writes poet and writer James Silas Rogers in the introduction to his book *Northern Orchards: Places Near the Dead*, a collection of essays and poems about cemeteries in Minnesota and the Upper Midwest.

As director of Irish Studies at the University of St. Thomas and editor of the *New Hibernia Review*, Rogers said he grew up visiting family graves and has long enjoyed walking through cemeteries. He decided to write a book about burial grounds, he said, "to work out in my mind why these places have heightened value."

Each essay in *Northern Orchards* explores one or more cemeteries in the context of someone or something that captured his interest. One centers, for example, on a long-forgotten Irish immigrant poet who is buried in a Catholic cemetery in Rochester. Another is about Rogers's unexpected encounter with an abandoned Amish cemetery near Worthington.

James Silas Rogers

Published in 2014, the volume was nominated for a Minnesota Book Award.

In 2016, Roger's wife Jeannie died. She is buried at Resurrection Cemetery in Mendota Heights, close to her family's relatives, and it is a place he visits often.

"I like to park at the main office and walk across the large open field in front of the office to the area of her grave. I find it a more gracious way of entering rather than zipping in and out," he said.

Rogers believes there is value in taking time at a cemetery — "to let the place speak to you, to make friends with the space," he said. "Most cemeteries are fenced off. They become a demarcated space that remind us of our mortality. I find that a burial ground is both a place apart and a place within."

Rogers says he also believes in the idea of presence — something that exists in a place but cannot be seen. "If you've ever been to an historic battlefield or an old revered ballpark, you probably know what I mean — they have a quality of presence about them. Cemeteries do as well," he said.

For Rogers, the purpose of the cemetery is less about perpetuating eternal remembrance than to promote healing forgetfulness. "At a certain point, you have to turn and walk away," he said. "The endpoint is to align ourselves with that which is greater than a single life. Even monuments will crumble someday but the place will remain always."

To contact Jim Rogers, e-mail **jsrminn@gmail.com**.

Excerpts from *Northern Orchards: Places Near the Dead*

"The phrase I keep coming back to, when I reflect on cemeteries, is 'the sacramentality of place.' For one thing, graveyards and church sanctuaries are pretty much the last places left in contemporary America that successfully resist advertising and commercialization; that alone counts as a spiritual experience. But the transcendent character of burial places rests on something deeper, I think. It puts me in the mind of the Catholic sacraments with which I have grown up: baptism that links dying with new life, confession that binds together recall and forgiveness."

"Somehow, the mere act of encountering name after name on headstones, even if they are unknown to us…allow these places of memory and forgetfulness to make a claim on us. In that way, I suppose, cemeteries become in the end places where we go to wait for our own story."

"Remembrance needs to lead us away from ourselves and into connectedness and awe before all that is greater than ourselves — not to celebrate the snowflake, but the snowflake falling in the river."

Northern Orchards: Places Near the Dead

By James Silas Rogers

A thought-provoking collection of essays and poems that explore memory, the meaning of place, and sacred spaces

2014. Published by North Star Press of St. Cloud. Available to purchase on Amazon.com and at area bookstores.

Compassionate Assistance Fund

Providing a sacred resting place for a young mother

In July, a young American Indian mother passed away suddenly, leaving an infant daughter behind.

The mother's grieving parents, Jerry and Lori Deerly, immediately brought the baby into their St. Paul home.

Fr. James Notebaart, pastor of the Church of Gichitwaa Kateri in Minneapolis, has known the Deerlys for 25 years. "Jerry is very active in the Indian community. I consider him one of the strongest, faith-filled leaders."

Star Deerly, who passed away in July 2017, is shown here with her dad Jerry and daughter Mni.

Fr. Notebaart said their daughter Star was only 29 years old at the time of her death, with an 18-month-old girl named Mni whom Jerry and Lori are now raising. They are already raising several other grandchildren.

With funeral expenses strapping the retired couple, family friend David Glass stepped in to help with burial arrangements.

"Jerry recently retired from Saint Paul Public Schools, where he taught in the district's Indian education program for 20 years," Glass said. "Over the years, he and Lori have continually lived out their values as to who we are as Indian people, constantly giving and helping others. They have invested their own earnings and savings in raising their grandchildren and in facing this crisis were stretched to the max emotionally and financially."

In the days leading up to Star's funeral, Glass made multiple contacts and his determined efforts eventually led him to John Cherek, director of The Catholic Cemeteries.

"John was extremely helpful. With little or no hesitation, he said that helping out in this family's situation is what The Catholic Cemeteries mission is all about," Glass said.

The Catholic Cemeteries made available a grave at Gethsemane Cemetery in New Hope and covered the opening and closing burial costs through the Compassionate Assistance Fund. The Fund was established to assist with associated costs of burial for those whose families are unable to pay for burial services. It also supports The Catholic Cemeteries ministry to the bereaved.

"It is our mission to provide a sacred resting place for all persons in need, no matter what their economic status," Cherek said. "Many generous donors who contribute to our Compassionate Assistance Fund help make this kind of assistance possible. We are so grateful for their support."

The determined efforts of David Glass led to assistance for the Deerly family through The Catholic Cemeteries Compassionate Assistance Fund.

Fr. Notebaart noted the importance of burial of the dead as one of the corporal acts of mercy of the Church. "It is vital that we as believers extend our compassion to those in distress and in fragile and vulnerable circumstances," he said.

Several days after Star's death, more than 700 people gathered at the American Indian Magnet School in Saint Paul for her funeral. "The large turnout was a tribute to Jerry and his family," said Glass, who noted that community members donated enough to cover the funeral home costs.

Lori Deerly said she and her husband were deeply touched by the generosity shown to them by so many people. And they are grateful that Star was laid to rest at Gethsemane where other family members are buried.

Children's Section

More than 840 grave stones cleaned in Eagle Scout's service project at Resurrection Cemetery

On a hot sunny day in June, Jay Dichter of Boy Scout Troop 82 led his fellow scouts, family and friends in his Eagle Scout service project — cleaning grave stones overgrown with grass in the Children's Section at Resurrection Cemetery in Mendota Heights. In spite of 90 degree temperatures, Dichter's team accomplished a lot over several hours, cutting back weeds and edging on more than 840 grave stones.

"The day went well, everyone worked hard and seemed to enjoy it, and we got a lot done," said Dichter, a student at Saint Thomas Academy, who organized the project from beginning to end.

Dichter said a highlight of the day came when cemetery visitors stopped by. "There were families that came to visit the grave of their lost child, and they thanked me for cleaning off the grave stone. That was rewarding," he said.

Dave Kemp of The Catholic Cemeteries expressed appreciation to Dichter and Troop 82 for choosing Resurrection for the cemetery beautification project. "Keeping the thousands of grave stones at Resurrection clear is beyond the scope of our small staff," he said. "These volunteers did a great service for our community."

Famliy and friends helped Dichter in his Eagle Scout service project.

VISIT *your cemetery!*

All cemeteries offering selection of burial options

The new columbarium at Calvary Cemetery.

Calvary Cemetery in St. Paul and **St. Mary's Cemetery** in south Minneapolis now have multiple graves available for full body and cremation burial. Both monument and non-monument graves can be chosen. If you prefer above ground burial for cremated remains, cremation niches are available in the striking columbarium facility in Calvary and the mausoleum. For more information about these options at Calvary Cemetery or St. Mary's Cemetery, call **651-488-8866**.

At **St. Anthony's Cemetery** in northeast Minneapolis, approximately 50 new full body graves will be available for sale starting June 2018. Cremation ground burial sites are also available in St. Anthony's. For more information, call **763-537-4184**.

Resurrection Cemetery in Mendota Heights has opened up a new section of ground burial sites for both full body and cremation interment. Several hundred graves sites are available. Please call Resurrection Cemetery for more information at **651-454-5072**.

Gethsemane Cemetery in New Hope has added two more columbariums in the beautiful Garden of the Sorrowful Mysteries — a garden designed for the burial of cremated remains. So far ten columbariums encircle the Garden area which feature a life-size statue of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. Hundreds of niches are also available in the new Garden Mausoleum facility located behind the Chapel Mausoleum. Please call Gethsemane Cemetery for more information at **763-537-4184**.

Renovation and remodeling projects completed

Workers preparing the new roof of the Gethsemane Chapel Mausoleum.

Concluding a summer-long renovation project, the Chapel Mausoleum at **Gethsemane Cemetery** now features a new roof, which includes a rubber membrane roofing material designed to withstand dramatically changing weather conditions. At the same time the mechanical units and ductwork for heating and air conditioning have been replaced.

In addition, the offices at **Calvary Cemetery** and **Gethsemane** have been updated with new furniture, carpeting and bathroom facilities to make office visits more welcoming and comfortable. **Resurrection Cemetery's** lobby area has also added new furniture.

Renovations underway at St. Mary's Cemetery.

St. Mary's Cemetery features a new front entrance gate. In addition, the street entrance to St. Mary's Cemetery Office/Shop building have been updated, complete with new handrails and handicap access.

Several roads and sewer drains in **Resurrection Cemetery** and **Calvary Cemetery** have been replaced, with more roadwork improvements planned in the coming year.

Last spring, a group of students from Saint Thomas Academy devoted community service hours to Resurrection Cemetery, removing spent Christmas wreaths and decorations and other debris from a large area of the cemetery.

Mike Gray has been named the new field manager at Resurrection Cemetery. He joined The Catholic Cemeteries in 2005. "Mike takes the mission of The Catholic Cemeteries very seriously. He is real asset to our team at Resurrection," said director John Cherek.

Masses of remembrance will be celebrated at Gethsemane Cemetery and Resurrection Cemetery in the chapel mausoleums on Saturday, December 9, 2017. 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.

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John Cherek, Director

To receive *Heritage* by email, go to www.catholic-cemeteries.org, fill out the "Contact Us" form and check the "electronic newsletter" option.

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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.

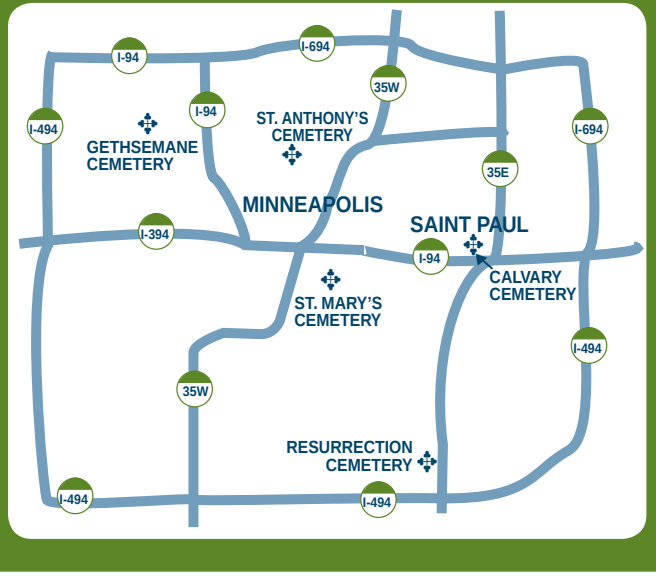
CALVARY CEMETERY
753 Front Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103
651-488-8866

GETHSEMANE 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
2730 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

An opportunity to give…

Please join us in supporting the ongoing ministries and beautification of The Catholic Cemeteries. Your tax-deductible contribution can be used to provide for burial of the poor, ministry to bereaved parents and families, and to beautify the cemeteries.

To make a gift:

- Clip and complete this form and mail with your check to:
  The Catholic Cemeteries, 2105 Lexington Ave. S., Mendota Heights, MN 55120 ***—OR—***
- Give online by going to **catholic-cemeteries.org** and click on Donate.

I want to support the ongoing ministries and beautification of The Catholic Cemeteries:

○ $1000 ○ $500 ○ $250 ○ $100 ○ Other $_____

I would like my gift to be used in the following way(s):

○ John Ireland Memorial Fund (Trees, landscaping and gardens) *Please direct my gift for trees to:*
○ Calvary ○ Gethsemane ○ Resurrection ○ St. Anthony's ○ St. Mary's ○ Where most needed

○ Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Compassionate Assistance Fund

○ Children's Memorials and Healing Gardens *Please direct my gift to:* ○ Resurrection ○ Gethsemane

○ Resurrection Chapel Mausoleum Peaceable Kingdom Garden Fund

Payment Options

○ **I have enclosed a check payable to The Catholic Cemeteries.**

○ **Please charge my credit card:** ○ Visa ○ Mastercard ○ Discover ○ American Express

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3-digit Security Code Expiration

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

If this contribution is given in memory/in honor of an individual, please print his/her name:

○ In memory ○ In honor _____

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Our thanks go to those listed below for gifts given to the donor funds of The Catholic Cemeteries between October 1, 2016 and September 30, 2017.

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