



HERITAGE

NEWS FOR FRIENDS OF THE CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

Honor and Preserve Our Lasting History



October marked the third time this year that the members of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) spent cleaning the monuments in the military section at St. Mary's Cemetery. The day also happened to be the DAR National Day of Service. They are members of Minnesota's Maria Sanford Chapter, and their mission is to promote historic preservation, education, and patriotism. With paint stir sticks, soft brushes, water, and cleaning solution in hand, they were able to make a considerable improvement to the

stones dating back to the Civil and the Spanish American Wars.

The Catholic Cemeteries have benefited from the work of the DAR. Each leadership administration chooses a focus area for service, and the newly elected State Regent, Kathleen Huston, has chosen as her project to concentrate the organization's efforts on preserving history and heritage through cemetery care and renewal. She has asked each chapter to adopt at least one cemetery in the chapter's local community, with an emphasis

on historic cemeteries or cemeteries where Minnesota veterans and/or pioneers are interred.

All cemeteries are in need of volunteer efforts to clean and preserve gravestones. There is also a need for help with trees, landscape gardens, repair or replacement of fencing and gates, or with documentation or installation of directories. Chapters are encouraged to work with cemetery associations to assess needs and provide meaningful assistance.

"While our American history here in Minnesota is relatively short compared to that of areas to the East," says State Regent Huston, "we still have a rich pioneer history, with those who led the way west, those who settled and built Minnesota, as well as the many who served our country over the course of time. Cemeteries are so important to our lasting heritage and need to be preserved! As we emerge from the pandemic, these activities will help our chapters perform a safe, distanced community service and enjoy DAR camaraderie."

Honor and Preserve continued on page 2

Honor and Preserve, *continued from page 1*

Today's DAR is made up of over 185,000 members in 3,000 chapters in the United States and abroad. Their members can trace their lineage to an individual who contributed to securing American independence during the Revolutionary War. DAR members annually provide millions of hours of volunteer service to their

local communities across the country and world. Over one million members have joined the organization since its founding in 1890. For more information about the DAR, visit www.dar.org. We are grateful for their service to us in preserving the memorials honoring our veterans.



Before



After



"We honor and preserve our lasting history through cemetery care and renewal."

Lead In Service and Faith

How does a funeral entourage know where to go when they first arrive at a cemetery? This is where the very valuable ministry of a "Lead-in" is needed.

For every burial, funeral homes need guidance navigating the cemetery layout and determining where the burial will take place. Additionally, many families are now scheduling the cremation burials of their loved ones without using the services of a funeral home. The results of both options are an increased need for a Lead-in.

The Lead-in is a volunteer who leads the funeral procession to the grave site, and collects the paperwork needed for the cemetery office. They will sometimes help with how the parking arrangement near a cemetery section will occur, especially if it is a large gathering. Also, if they are trained and willing to do so, they may also lead the final prayers if

there is not a priest or pastoral minister available.

In our historic cemeteries, you will often see field staff doing this ministry. At Resurrection, often we have as many as six or seven burials in one day, which is where there is the greatest need for lead-ins. If burials are scheduled close together, we need the office staff to assist with leading in funerals. You may have even seen our Director leading in processions because of how busy we are.

This is a valuable and needed service, and therefore we are looking for more volunteers to help with this ministry at Resurrection Cemetery. We have burials Monday through Saturday. Training for this ministry is offered, at whatever level of involvement one desires. Shifts can be mornings, afternoons, or all day. If this sounds like something you would be interested in considering, please contact our Pastoral Outreach office at 651-255-0536.

News & Events

BRINGING THEM HOME, Fall of 2021

A number of families were served in our Fall 2021 Amnesty Program, "Bringing Them Home". We hope to continue developing this program serving the community in the Fall of 2022 and beyond. Check our website for updates on this important ministry.

PRE-PLANNING SEMINARS: It's the Right Thing To Do

In September, we offered a number of pre-planning seminars at Resurrection and Gethsemane Cemeteries. They were very well attended. Additional offerings and special promotions will be offered again in the Spring of 2022.

Stay tuned to our website catholic-cemeteries.org/news for updates on news & events.

Please note that this year's **Mass of Remembrance** has been cancelled at both Resurrection and Gethsemane cemeteries, due to ongoing Covid concerns. We hope to resume the Mass once again next year.
Thank you.



CALVARY, *Developing Property*

Cemetery Updates

CALVARY

- Of the three roads that have been taken out, all have been backfilled with one being fully prepped for seeding. Irrigation was installed and graves were pegged. The other two former roads will be completed next Spring. This allows us to add additional graves.
- Sidewalks near the mausoleum have been replaced.
- Columns from the former second entrance have been moved to the main entrance. The fence will be repaired alongside Front Street.
- A family's private columbarium was installed behind the Davini mausoleum.

GETHSEMANE

- New columbarium was installed in the old entrance area.
- Stairs and sidewalks replaced in front of office.
- Irrigation added to Section 9.
- Five foundations were poured for future columbaria in the rosary garden.
- Prairie Restoration is maintaining our wildflower berm.

RESURRECTION

- Curbing in front of chapel mau-



GETHSEMANE CEMETERY, *New Curbing*

- soleum was added. Sections of road were replaced and patched, and several catch basins were repaired.
- Five additional ledger foundations were installed in the Children's Memorial area for future memorialization.
- The sidewalk in Section 7 was installed and landscaping is being completed leading up to the new columbarium. Markers have been raised near this area.
- Work continues on the old fence line along Lexington Avenue as time permits.
- Xcel Energy has replaced original power towers from the 1940s. These were the oldest transmission lines in the state and provide power to the Mall of America and the airport.

ST. MARY'S

- Concrete pad was removed and seeded.
- New signage will be installed on corners of the cemetery.



GETHSEMANE CEMETERY, *New Columbarium*

Photography Contest Winners!

This year we held our first ever Photography Contest, and we're happy to announce the winners! First place went to Lauren McLeete, of Minneapolis.

Lauren grew up in Maine and moved to Minnesota with her family, where she is an early childhood special educator. She lives near the cemetery and walks or bikes through St. Mary's every day with her three small children. They love its peaceful beauty, and one hot, sunny summer day she was inspired to take this photo of her favorite tree. She told us that since the pandemic, St. Mary's has become an even greater outlet for the community, who visit and walk along its roads more and more, joining those who come to visit the graves of loved ones. She and her children have also spotted a great deal of wildlife: everything from foxes to turkeys to geese in our city cemetery. We're grateful to Lauren for her contribution to this competition and for showcasing the beauty of St. Mary's in such a spectacular way.



"The combination of bright green...plus the clouds and shadows make this picture very interesting. The white stone marker in the foreground and the others in the background add to the composition".



Meet the Judge: Dave Hrbacek

Dave Hrbacek is an award-winning Senior Content Specialist for The Catholic Spirit, where he has been a photojournalist and reporter for over 25 years. He specializes in photojournalism, freelance photography, events, and portraits. We're grateful for his assistance and artistic eye!



2nd Place

Ed Getz, Resurrection Cemetery

"The cloudy weather creates deep saturation, and the dusting of leaves on the ground makes this image complete".

3rd Place

Ann Lazor, Gethsemane Cemetery

"This shot grabs and holds your attention...a perfect illustration of why a Catholic Cemetery is such a beautiful choice for burial".



From the Executive Director



Joan Gecik,
Executive Director

We had hoped that there would be some sort of normalcy by this point in the calendar year. However, the new normal seems to include wearing masks in areas where many people gather and waiting for a booster shot like we do for the annual flu shot. Because of the Delta Covid variation, all our offices require masks be worn, hands sanitized, and maintaining at least three feet of social distancing. In group meetings, we all wear masks. We limit how many people can be in a room at the same time and still attend many meetings via Zoom. Our concern is for the safety of both our staff and visitors. So, unfortunately it has been decided that we cannot do the Holiday Mass of Remembrance this December. We will weigh all the factors before making a decision about any future events such as Memorial Day, cemetery tours, or large group presentations.

We have been busy with some cemetery improvements: new graves at Calvary, new curbs and catch basins at Resurrection, new columbarium at both Resurrection and Gethsemane, and repairs to our sprinkler systems and water pipes. Because of the drought, there were many sections of lawn that were hit with a grass fungus easily spread by lawnmowers or just walking through the infected grass. All of these sections will be reseeded before winter.

Our Strategic Planning process is almost complete and now we have three years of practical work to accomplish. Some of this entailed updating and rewriting all job descriptions, updating our Standards of Care and Employee Handbook, as well as interviewing and hiring new staff. We too had a worker shortage this summer. The cemeteries hired seasonal workers to do lawn-mowing, weed-whipping, and other landscape maintenance, and all of our cemeteries needed more workers than we were able to hire. We can only hope that next summer will not be the same.

We also found that burials were up 15% over other years. Many more people came in to do pre-planning. Cremation rates were definitely up, with the projection for the Twin Cities to hit 90% by 2030, so we are discussing what this means for our plans for each cemetery. More people are inquiring about cremation and green burial options. We are constantly inundated with requests for grave locations. All of this challenges us to look at new ways to use technology.

Our new budget was finalized at the end of September (our fiscal year runs from October through September). We have some exciting plans for our cemeteries along with some new staff to help us accomplish them. We look forward to new beginnings even as we are grateful for the blessings we've had this past year. Thank you for your support, understanding, and kind words for our ministry.

Saying Hello and Goodbye

We welcome Lily Blahna as the new Office Assistant for Resurrection Cemetery.

Two of our seasoned staff have also made changes within the organization. Josh Brown has been with The Catholic Cemeteries for over 22 years and is now the Field Manager for our historic cemeteries – Calvary in St. Paul and St. Mary's in Minneapolis.

Mike Gray has moved from Resurrection Cemetery taking on the role of Field Manager at Gethsemane in New Hope and St. Anthony Cemeteries in Minneapolis.

John Menshek, Field Manager at Gethsemane and St. Anthony, retired at the beginning of July. John has worked at The Catholic Cemeteries for over 35 years. A reception for John was held

Saying Hello continued on page 6



Lily Blahna
Resurrection



Josh Brown
Calvary/St. Mary's



Mike Gray
Gethsemane/St. Anthony

Saying Hello and Goodbye, *continued from page 5*

in September, where we shared food and stories before offering a blessing for him in his retirement years.

Sr. Fran Donnelly has been with The Catholic Cemeteries for the past 13 years and will be retiring from her position in early January. She has been instrumental in developing the quarterly Fetal Burial Service, the annual Mass of Remembrance, Memorial Day Mass, Amnesty for Cremated Remains and Natural Burial. Sr. Fran also oversees grief follow-up for all families that have a burial in one of our cemeteries. Often her work is behind the scenes, speaking with individuals who have questions around death and grief for various situations. Her compassion, especially in times of stress, benefited both families as well as our own staff.

We are grateful for those new to our organization and the gifts they bring to us. We also give thanks for those who continue to grow within our organization and take on new challenges, and we are most grateful to those who have been an important part of our history and ministry.



Sr. Fran Donnelly
Director of LifeTransition
Ministry



Congratulations John!
John Menshek, Gethsemane
& St. Anthony Cemeteries

Cemetery Decorations

We invite you to place your decorations when visiting our cemeteries. To better serve all families who entrust their beloved to our care, we appreciate your attention in helping to keep the cemetery in a neat and presentable manner by following our Decoration Rules, which can be found on our website at catholic-cemeteries.org/traditional-memorials/. The following is a summary:



Wreaths

- Holiday wreaths that were ordered through The Catholic Cemeteries will be placed prior to December 1.
- Our staff will begin to pick up wreaths starting in March, weather permitting.

Flowers:

- Fresh cut flowers are welcome when placed in a permanent vase or in repurposed plastic vases that are sometimes available at our cemetery locations.
- Artificial flowers are only allowed in vases that are part of a monument feature.
- Glass containers are not permitted at any burial site at any time.
- At the time of burial, flowers will be left a minimum of three days and then removed.



Decorations:

- Memorial Day: decorations are allowed during the days immediately before and after the holiday. Decorations are removed one week following the holiday.
- Natural evergreen wreaths are permitted from November through March.
- Other decorations are not allowed unless previously approved by cemetery management.

Plantings & Food:

- No plantings of any kind are allowed in the ground at the gravesite.
- Food brought to a gravesite must be removed by the visitors when they leave. Food waste attracts wildlife, especially rodents that do damage to our cemeteries. This litter also creates a health hazard to staff and visitors.

To learn more about memorialization options, visit our website.

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

- **By check.** Clip and complete this form and mail with your check to: The Catholic Cemeteries, 2105 Lexington Ave. S., Mendota Heights, MN 55120
- **Online.** Go to catholic-cemeteries.org and click on "Donate."

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

\$1,000 \$500 \$250 \$100 Other \$ _____

Please direct my gift to:

Calvary Gethsemane Resurrection
 St. Anthony's St. Mary's

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

- Unrestricted Donation
- Statuary and Beautification Fund
- John Ireland Memorial Tree Fund (trees, landscaping, and gardens)
- Archbishop Harry J. Flynn Compassionate Assistance Fund
- Children's Memorial & Healing Garden at Resurrection
- Peaceable Kingdom Garden at Resurrection Chapel Mausoleum
- Children's Memorial & Healing Garden at Gethsemane

PAYMENT OPTIONS

- I have enclosed a check payable to The Catholic Cemeteries.
- Please charge my credit card:
 Visa Mastercard Discover American Express

Card number: _____
Expiration date Security code

Credit-card billing address: _____
Street address

City, state, and Zip Code _____

Signature _____
Please print all information below.

Your name: _____

Address: _____

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

In memory In honor _____
Name

In Appreciation

We thank those listed below for gifts given to the donor funds of The Catholic Cemeteries between October 1, 2020, and September 30, 2021.

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catholic-cemeteries.org/ways-to-donate

*We are grateful for
 your generosity and support.*



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FALL/WINTER 2021

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- Cemetery Decorations



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info@catholic-cemeteries.org

Joan Gecik, Executive Director

To receive *Heritage* by email, go
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Thank you.



CEMETERY HOURS

Every day of the year, cemetery grounds are open
from dawn to dusk (generally 5 p.m. in the winter).
You may reach all cemetery offices by phone or email
Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Visit our website: www.catholic-cemeteries.org

 Follow us on Facebook: [TheCatholicCemeteries](https://www.facebook.com/TheCatholicCemeteries)

GETHSEMANE CEMETERY

8151 42nd Avenue North
New Hope, MN 55427
763-537-4184

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

CALVARY CEMETERY

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

RESURRECTION CEMETERY

2101 Lexington Avenue South
Mendota Heights, MN 55120
651-454-5072