
Parish Cemetery Policy

Diocese of Marquette

Office of the Chancellor



January 1, 2021

I. Table of Contents

I. General Norms..... 4

II. Fiscal Norms..... 5

III. Records Management 6

IOANNES FRANCISCUS

Divina Miseratione et



Apostolicae Sedis Gratia

EPISCOPUS MARQUETTENSIS

DECREE

PROMULGATION OF THE PARISH CEMETERY POLICY

Whereas, the Instruction, *Ad resurgendum cum Christo*, reminds us that, “Following the most ancient Christian tradition, the Church insistently recommends that the bodies of the deceased be buried in cemeteries or other sacred places (n. 3)”.

Whereas, Canon 1243 *CIC 1983* established that particular law is to establish appropriate norms about the discipline to be observed in cemeteries, especially with regard to protecting and fostering their sacred character;

Therefore, in accord with canons 8 §2, 29, 391§1 and 1243 I hereby decree and promulgate as particular law, for the Diocese of Marquette, the Parish Cemetery Policy.

All former parish cemetery policies of the Diocese of Marquette are hereby repealed and abrogated in accord with canon 20 §1. Any policies or particular laws of the Diocese of Marquette that are not in conformity with the Parish Cemetery Policy are hereby repealed and abrogated.

The provisions of this decree shall become effective January 1, 2021.

Given at the chancery in Marquette, Michigan this 17th day of November in the year 2020.

Most Reverend John F. Doerfler, STD, JCL
Bishop of Marquette

MaryAnn Bernier, Vice-Chancellor

I. General Norms

1. The term “cemetery” as used in this policy includes the property for in-ground burials, and any mausoleum or columbarium for crypt or niche entombment that is the responsibility of the parish.
2. The creation, design, construction or expansion of any cemetery, columbarium or mausoleum requires the permission of the Bishop.
3. Construction or installation of columbaria is only permitted on land of existing parish cemeteries.
4. Columbaria are not permitted in churches or chapels in the Diocese of Marquette.
5. Each parish cemetery is to have rules and regulations that outline the responsibilities, rights, restrictions, etc. that govern all parties that have an interest in the cemetery. The rules and regulations are to be approved by the Bishop.
6. Each parish cemetery is to establish a committee or appoint members of parish council to oversee the cemetery administration. By-laws for the committee are to be submitted to the Bishop for approval.
7. There should be a crucifix at the cemetery (Can. 1205, Book of Blessings, n. 1418).
8. Upon completion, new cemeteries are to be blessed in the manner prescribed by the liturgical books. A document attesting to this blessing is to be kept in the parish archive and a copy sent to the diocesan chancellor (can. 1208).
9. No symbols or ceremonies, religious or otherwise, may be used or performed in a cemetery that would be contrary or offensive to the Catholic faith.
10. Cemeteries are to follow all civil laws regarding cemetery operations, burials, and interments.
11. Scattering of cremated remains is not permitted in cemeteries.
12. Disinterments when necessary, are to be conducted in accord with civil law.

II. Fiscal Norms

13. The Pastor must ensure orderly operation of the parish cemetery and that it is maintained in good condition.
14. All funds related to the cemetery must be kept separate from those of the parish.
15. All funds received through the sale of cemetery plots, mausoleum crypts, or columbarium niches are to be used for cemetery, mausoleum or columbarium purposes only.
16. Any newly established cemetery or columbarium must establish a perpetual care trust fund.
 - a. At least 15 percent of gross revenue derived from the sale of cemetery plots, mausoleum crypts, or columbarium niches are to be permanently trusted in the perpetual care trust fund. Only the earnings of this fund may be used to help pay for maintenance costs.
 - b. At least 15 percent of the earnings of the perpetual care trust fund are to be reinvested in the same fund.
 - c. All monies in any newly established perpetual care fund must be deposited in a fund in the Upper Peninsula Catholic Foundation (UPCF). If the available funds do not meet the qualifications to establish a fund in the UPCF then the funds must be invested in the Diocese of Marquette Investment Pool.
 - d. Prior to the creation, design, construction or expansion of any cemetery, columbarium, or mausoleum it must be demonstrated that there are necessary funds to establish a perpetual care trust fund.
 - e. Earnings from the perpetual care trust fund are to cover maintenance and upkeep of the cemetery. This fund is to cover overall maintenance including foundation repairs for mausoleums and columbaria and columbaria niche plate replacements.
17. The most current diocesan chart of accounts is to be used for parish cemetery accounting.

III. Records Management

18. Each cemetery is to maintain complete and accurately recorded cemetery records, which should include a map of the plots, mausoleum and columbarium niches, the names and owners of grave easements, together with the dates of death and burial.
19. All proper records, maps, etc. must be kept at the parish office in a secure manner.
20. Records of all contracts for burial rights in the cemetery are to be signed by the pastor and the purchaser and a copy is to be preserved at the parish.

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