

The Cemeteries of St. Mary's and the Missions
2024 Spring Newsletter

The coming year will see great improvements in our 4 cemeteries. Projects include the purchase of a 64 niches columbarium to complete the installation at St. Mary's in Georgian Bluffs. This major expenditure is designed to meet this growing preference of many parishioners. Over the past 3 years all stones in 3 cemeteries have been power washed and this year St. Mary's in South Bruce Peninsula which serves the communities of Hepworth and Sauble Beach among others will be completed. In 2024 we recognize and congratulate St. Stanislaus Cemetery on its' 170th anniversary.

Lynn Curley, our present cemeteries' manager, is training her replacement in preparation for a seamless transition. Lynn has guided our cemeteries through a period of change as we became fully autonomous with new by laws and contractor services. The parish is blessed to have had her direction, dedication, and drive. Adam Helmers, a young family man with a proven commitment to our parish, has been selected by the Board to assume the role of cemeteries' manager. Adam brings youth, experience in faith-based organizations in the non-profit sector, leadership and impressive skills in finance, communication, and organization. We thank Lynn for her service and offer a warm welcome to Adam.

Spring cemetery clean-up is in progress. We remind everyone that all decorations, plants, and shrubs must be removed from gravesites in accordance with cemetery bylaws and posted signage. All flower beds will be removed and replaced with sod. We understand the importance of honouring loved ones and appreciate your assistance in keeping our cemeteries beautiful for all to enjoy. You can place only a decorative saddle on upright markers or a single well drained cone in front of each flat marker. Spring bulbs such as tulips and daffodils planted close to your marker are a great option. Any decorations remaining on graves will be discarded.

Costs for grass cutting and other maintenance activities have risen sharply this year and the price of fuel, labour and other inflationary pressures combine to strain our budget.

Bishop Crosby will place an amount to match your donation into our Care and Maintenance Fund. We need to double the principal in the C&M fund to generate enough interest to meet our annual maintenance costs. Your support of this spring collection will allow us to maintain the cemetery this year. The bishop's matching dollars assure that funds will be available in perpetuity. This is the nature of our commitment to those buried in our cemeteries. A fully funded C&M is our aim, and we are making steady progress.

What can you do to assure that our cemeteries continue to be beautiful resting places for our loved ones? Support the Spring and Fall Cemetery Collections, purchase a lot, plot, niche, marker, or memory wall plaque, dedicate a bench, or donate to the Cemetery Fund in memory of a departed loved one.

The Spring Cemetery Collection will take place Mother's Day weekend – May 11/12 at all the masses. We thank you for your generous support in the past and look forward to your continued support.

Parishioners who use the weekly envelope box can make their donation by using the beige colored "Cemeteries Collection" envelope provided. Others may do so by using a plain envelope or one of the purple envelopes marked "All Souls Day" that can be found at the back of the church. Please return your contribution next week or any time during the month of May.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Cemeteries' Board.

Michael Donovan, Current Chairperson.