

The Cemeteries' of St. Mary's and the Missions

2021 Fall Newsletter

The coming months will bring about several exciting changes and each holds the promise of a secure future for our 4 parish cemeteries.

At the Fall meeting of the Board of Directors it was decided to discontinue an operating agreement with the City of Owen Sound and Greenwood Cemetery under which they provided services to St. Mary's Georgian Bluffs Cemetery. As of December 1st, 2021 all activities related to that cemetery will be handled by our Cemeteries' Manager. This will be a cost saving and provide one point of contact for prospective plot holders and present rights holders. It demonstrates a growing maturity in our operations and a more predictable future.

The Board also approved a motion to make road improvements at St. Mary's Georgian Bluffs beginning with paving the main entrance road and circle driveway. The work is scheduled for the Spring of 2022 at a cost of just over \$20,000. Further paving of other roads will be scheduled as funds become available.

Our present Cemeteries' Manager, Angela Corrigan will be leaving her post on a fulltime basis as of December 31st of this year. The Board is grateful for her skills and hard work over the past 5 years. The columbarium project, roadway improvements, fencing, plot development and a legacy of sound management practices are all a credit to her devoted leadership. We wish her well in the future.

The Board endorsed the hiring of Lynn Curley as the new Cemeteries' Manager to begin fulltime as of January 1st, 2022. Lynn is recently retired from a career as a recreation therapist. She is an active parishioner at St. Mary's Owen Sound and a rights holder at St. Michael's in the Irish Block. She has spent the past year shadowing Angela in all aspects of the Cemetery Management. We are confident in her abilities and are pleased that she has accepted this role.

As has been our past practice all cemeteries will be closed each year from December 1st to May 1st unless otherwise directed by provincial authorities due to Covid-19. Visitors are still welcome to walk in the cemetery and visit graves during this period. We ask that solar lights

and other decorations be removed for the winter months for safety reasons and to spare major clean up in the spring.

Work has begun to pressure wash the current inventory of all upright and pillow markers in each of the 4 cemeteries. St. Michael's has been completed to our satisfaction and the remaining cemeteries will be budgeted in 2022.

Two new 48 niche columbarium units were delivered in May 2021. This brings our total inventory to 144 niches, each of which can hold 2 urns from the same family. You can now be assured of a premium location by purchasing your niche or memory wall plaque this winter. It is always easier on family to make arrangements before the need is imminent.

St. Mary's & the Missions are blessed to have 4 beautiful cemeteries that serve as the resting place of generations who have gone before us. We hold these properties in sacred trust with an inherent obligation to care for them in perpetuity. We are always grateful for your generous support, however in this unusual year we make a special request that you make your best efforts to share your blessings with our cemeteries. Regular maintenance such as grass cutting and tree removal as well as major projects such as those planned need your annual support.

You can support our cemeteries by purchasing a lot, plot, niche or memory wall plaque or by making a bequest to the Cemetery Fund. There are great tax advantages to making a bequest now or in your last will and testament. Your financial planner can help you with this.

This week we celebrate All Saints Day and All Souls Day. We remember those who have gone before us and now rest in our cemeteries awaiting the final resurrection. Any time during the month of November you are urged to return your Parish Cemeteries Collection offering. Those with envelope boxes will find an envelope dedicated to this collection. Extra envelopes marked All Souls can be picked up at the back of the church this month. If you are not attending mass in person, please drop off or mail your donation marked "Cemetery Collection" directly to the parish office at the address on the front of the bulletin.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Cemeteries' Board,

Michael Donovan, Current Chairperson