

Consecrated Grounds

Preparing for Eternity

Winter 2025



Catholic Cemeteries
ARCHDIOCESE OF OMAHA

*Our Faith is at the Heart
of All That We Do!*

Being on Pilgrimage

Rev. Michael Grewe, Executive Director



I was recently on a Pilgrimage with 30 people to Medjugorje. You may have heard about this village in Bosnia/Herzegovina where our Blessed Mother has reportedly appeared to six young people starting in 1981. The Church has

not definitively declared that the apparitions are authentic, but it has declared that there is nothing to hold us back from visiting Medjugorje because great spiritual fruit is coming out of it. I would say that was certainly my experience. I was touched by the great faith that I saw in the many pilgrims that were there. I helped with confessions in the afternoons, and the lines were always very long! During the evening outdoor Mass, it was typical to have several thousand people present.

It was interesting to be in the sacristy before the Mass and rub shoulders with priests from all over the world – some from Ukraine, Africa, and Ireland, just to mention a few. We were all there to open our hearts to the message of our Blessed Mother. She has deep concern for us her beloved children and wants us to grow closer to her son. I certainly felt her motherly care during my time there. I came home with a deeper love for the rosary and with a stronger commitment to pray for peace in our world and in our own hearts. If you are interested, I encourage you to research Medjugorje or even visit with someone who has already been there. They could give you their insights into this holy place. Who knows, maybe you, too, will make a pilgrimage there someday!

In many ways a pilgrimage is a metaphor for our life on earth. We are a pilgrim people on our journey

Continued on page 4

Inside this issue

- The Seasons of Grief
- Monthly Memorial Mass Dates
- Resurrection Fountain
- Calvary Serenity Garden Niches Available
- Pardon our Dust
- Preparation

Our newsletter has gone digital.
Sign up today so you don't miss an update!

CatholicCem.com/Newsletter



Catholic Cemeteries

ARCHDIOCESE OF OMAHA

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

(78th Street south entrance)
 Calvary Cemetery
 7710 West Center Road
 Omaha, NE 68124
 402-391-3711
CatholicCem.com

Office hours: 8 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Monday-Friday
 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday

FIVE CONSECRATED CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

- Calvary 7710 W. Center Road
- Resurrection 7800 W. Center Road
- Holy Sepulchre 4912 Leavenworth St.
- St. Mary Magdalene 5226 S. 46th St.
- St. Mary 3353 Q St.

Gates Open: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.
 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. during Standard Time)

STAFF MEMBERS

- Rev. Michael Grewe Executive Director
- Deacon Steve Hill Director
- Bill Barnes Manager, Memorials and Facilities
- Denyse Lafferty Accounting Manager
- Deacon Jim Tardy Outreach Manager
- Deacon Norm Tierney Manager of Ministry
- Lance Zimmerman Manager, Family Services
- Kathy Dropinski Family Services Supervisor
- Lou Illian Family Services Representative
- Elyse Armstrong Family Services Representative
- Samantha Lierz Memorials Representative
- Peggy Sjuts Memorials Representative
- Rachel Meyer Administrative Assistant
- Dan Gilster Manager, Grounds and Facilities
- Ray Dropinski Operations Assistant Manager
- John Czeranko Caretaker, Holy Sepulchre
- Zach Urwin Caretaker, St. Mary and St. Mary Magdalene
- Jim Allen Operations Representative
- Greg Boll Operations Representative
- Chase Dropinski Operations Representative
- Zach Jeffrey Operations Representative
- Rain Jeffrey Operations Representative
- Gabe Vorland Operations Representative
- Caleb Connelly Operations Representative
- Tim Dropinski Part-time Operations Representative
- Steve Goetzinger Part-time Family Services Representative

CATHOLIC CEMETERIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Most Reverend Michael G. McGovern
- Rev. Michael Grewe
- Rev. Scott Hastings
- Rev. Richard Reiser
- Deacon Steve Hill
- Deacon Randy Grosse
- J. J. Schenkelberg
- Andrea McMahon
- Glen Kampschneider

Monthly Memorial Mass

Mass Dates for the Remainder of 2025		
November 4	December 2	

Mass Dates for 2026		
January 6	May 5	September 1
February 3	June 2	October 13
March 3	July 7	November 3
April 7	August 4	December 1



Vandalism and Equipment Issues Impact Resurrection Cemetery Fountain

Deacon Steve Hill, Director



I am sorry that 2025 has been a very difficult year for our fountain in Resurrection Cemetery. I know how important this area is for our families, and this year was not remotely close to how we would like things to have gone.

Shortly after preparing the fountain and starting it up this spring, we had a significant failure in the motor that runs the fountain. Given the age of the motor, we began looking for replacement options but due to availability issues coupled with the size of the motor, we had to focus on making repairs to the existing motor. As we were wrapping up the motor repair, an issue with the impeller pump was then identified. We finally completed all necessary repairs and were able to restart the fountain in July.

In mid-August, we were the victim of vandalism – someone broke into the fountain assembly and dismantled our newly repaired motor and pump and caused significant damage to other equipment necessary for fountain operations. Due to the severity of the vandalism, we had to replace every component – fortunately, we were able to start fresh, completely rethinking the equipment and systems needed for operation. This replacement was completed in September, and all of this equipment is now under lock and key.

I appreciate your patience as we navigated these issues this year. We are hopeful that all of this is now behind us; and we are comforted that should something occur again, these newer systems will be easier to repair.



The Seasons of Grief

Deacon Jim Tardy, Outreach Manager

Henry David Thoreau wrote, "The thinnest yellow light of November is more warming and exhilarating than any wine they tell of."

It has been a few autumns since I felt that warm glow of orange, and yellow, mixed with the pastels of a crisp fall night that somehow draws me closer to God's creation and his longing for me. Fall signifies a time for me to think how much God through His Son Jesus Christ really loves me. We are reminded in the Acts of the Apostles that we truly are His offspring. Therefore, it is a truth that God loves us the same from our birth until our death in this world.

Too often our emotions and our spiritual being change as radically as the seasons of the year. Yet God continues in His love for each of us regardless of where we find ourselves emotionally and spiritually. All too often I find that people who encounter grief are much like the seasons we live in. If you think about it, each season paints a different picture for us. Winter in its white brilliance too often reminds us of starkness and a dormant life that gives way to the warm rains and colors of spring. Summer allows many of us to bask in warmth and the fruits of what spring brought us and fall allows us to absorb the beautiful colors of our lives until that first deep frost.

Most often, when I sit with people who have experienced the loss of a loved one and pray with them, I feel the tensions, the sorrows, sometimes relief and the change that is now starting as they enter a new season of life for themselves. I will always ask, even though everything written states we should not ask, "How are you doing?" I try to look at this encounter through the lens of compassion that God has gifted me with. "I am fine" or "OK," they

might reply. Some may be angry and others a bit lost or bewildered. Often I hear, "Oh, they are in a better place now." Doesn't this sound like the seasons of our life? Of course, none of these answers are right or wrong. They are, however, a part of the core of who we are. We can be stark as winter, filled with the hope of spring, strong as the sun of August or perhaps the colors of fall waiting for the wind to sweep today away with the leaves.

During this season, I hope between sips of warm cider that you stop and ponder your personal state of life. Regardless of the season, in God's love we will all be called home in one season or another. How prepared are you for this? Have you planted the seeds of your gardens to be watered and tempered in summer to be harvested in the fall to go home? Have you thought about the change in your life in the loss of a loved one? How will you navigate the beautiful seasonal changes coming to you? If you come to Catholic Cemeteries we will help you through these moments. You see, my friends, our compassion at this time is seen every season in our prayer for and with you, in our assisting you with cemetery questions in the hour of your loved one's death and always answered in the warmth and colors of God's Grace. Whether this is in our office or on the phone, or our monthly Memorial Mass. Maybe you feel the fruits of these prayerful gifts in our Advent services, Lenten services, or our grief seminars. Regardless, our prayers are not seasonal. They are constant in our mission of the corporal work of mercy to bury the dead.

We want you to know that regardless of the season of the year, "Our faith is at the heart of all we do!"

Being on Pilgrimage

continued from page 1

to the Kingdom of God. In reference to our Catholic Cemeteries, our beloved dead have completed their earthly pilgrimage. They now await what will hopefully be a merciful judgement from our loving God. In the meantime, we continue to hold them up in prayer. We ask God to heal any spiritual damage that life has inflicted upon them. We also ask for

their prayers that we may hear the voice of God in our lives and follow Him with great devotion. We live in hope that when our earthly pilgrimage is completed that we will join our family and friends in the joys of the life to come. May God be merciful to all of us and bring us to His Kingdom to live with Him forever.

Calvary Cemetery Serenity Garden Niches Available

If you've visited Calvary Cemetery recently, coming in from its Mercy Road entrance, you might have noticed a concrete patio near our Serenity infant section. We are in the process of creating the Serenity Garden Columbarium section. The centerpiece of this area will be a statue of Jesus with the Children, including a verse from Mark 10:14, "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them." Weather permitting, we anticipate these columbarium will be installed before Thanksgiving.

We are very excited about this area! As you can see from the artist's rendering, these columbarium will be a collection of both single and companion niches specifically designed to house cremated remains. While open to all our families, we feel this area will be especially desirable for those families with infants interred in our Serenity infant section. Prior to this garden, there were no options available for families to be interred close to their infant.



We have some introductory incentives available for our Serenity Garden Columbarium area, including pre-installation discounts. Please contact one of our [Family Services Representatives](#) for more information.

Pardon our Dust

We've undertaken some significant construction projects within our cemeteries this past year. In Resurrection Cemetery, we completed installing a sidewalk between the new north-south road and Holy Angels Mausoleum. This work included adding new family estates alongside the sidewalk. This area looks beautiful!

At Calvary Cemetery, we renovated the entry area to Suffering Christ Mausoleum. This renovation eliminated the multi-tiered walk in front of the mausoleum but also addressed some hazardous drop-offs along the sidewalk. We repaired broken curbing and sidewalk areas near the entry to the Chapel of the Apostles Mausoleum.



We repaired broken curbing and sections of the roadway between these two mausoleums. We also installed a patio near our Mercy Road entrance necessary where our Serenity Columbarium Garden will be installed.

Continued on page 5

Preparation

Deacon Norm Tierney,
Manager of Ministry



As I write this, we are just a few days past the first day of fall. My wife and I have already started planting several mums, and a few other perennials we want to take root before the weather takes a turn. We are also making space for a variety of pumpkins we will be setting out.

Before we are done, we will be doing some things people won't notice on the surface, like turning the sprinkler off, unhooking any hoses that are on the outside faucets. Then there is the walk around the outside of the house to ensure there are no gaps

around pipes entering the house. If there are, we will caulk them.

As I contemplate all these seasonal preparations, I see a similarity between this and the day-to-day preparation we should be doing for our eternal salvation. Preparing for a season once a year is important, but not nearly as important as preparing for a life in Heaven with our Lord. What are some things I should do to prepare for meeting Jesus?

- In prayer, invite the Lord to enter my heart, and to guide my thoughts and actions in a way that will glorify Him.
- Pray daily and make it personal! Establish a real relationship with a God who wants nothing less.
- Read the Bible and allow the words of the Gospel to be planted in my soul.
- Nourish God's word within my soul through daily prayer and weekly Mass, if not more frequent.
- Immerse myself in the Sacraments, especially the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

- Serve the Lord by serving those in need, giving back what God has given to me.

These are just a few things; you may have other ways to prepare yourself to meet Christ. One thing I know for sure, we should always keep moving toward God, not away from Him. If we do this, we will be rooted in the Lord! Then when challenges come and create storms in our lives, we will be able to withstand the rain, the cold and droughts that may come our way.

We will be able to stand firm when the winds of temptation, despair and anger blow. Having a deep and real relationship with Christ will bolster our trust, faith and hope in Him.

Then when our time comes to meet the Lord face to face, we will hear: "Well done good and faithful servant! Come and take your place at the table of the Heavenly Banquet!"

May the peace of God be with you.



Pardon our Dust *Continued from page 4*

As for upcoming projects, we intend to replace the paver stones making up the patio at the Resurrection Cemetery fountain. These pavers continue to heave each winter, looking unsightly but also causing trip hazards.

We've removed one of the glass walls within Holy Angels Mausoleum, intending to convert the previously unused conference room into space for new cremation niches. We plan to renovate the altar at St. Mary's Cemetery and install some foundation beams at St. Mary Magdalene Cemetery, allowing for single upright marker grave spaces. We are hopeful these new projects will be completed before Memorial Day 2026.

We continue to look for ways to improve our cemeteries, increasing their functionality and capacity, but also attempting to enhance their beauty. Construction is never enjoyable, but we feel this temporary pain will be well worth it.

Christmas Decorations Now Available from Our Online Store

Visit: CatholicCem.com/Flowers

Check out our online flower store. Honor the memory of your loved ones with a flower placement ordered easily through our website.

We will place Christmas decorations on graves beginning Friday, November 28th. Order early, as quantities are limited. We reserve the right to substitute.



Catholic Cemeteries
ARCHDIOCESE OF OMAHA



Mail complete form to:

Catholic Cemeteries • 7710 W Center Road • Omaha, NE 68124

Orders can also be placed [online](#) or by calling 402-391-3711

Name of Deceased	Name of Cemetery	Item Letter	Item Name	Quantity	Unit Price	Total









Ordered by: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please circle method of payment: Check Visa Mastercard American Express Discover

Card number: _____ Exp. Date: ____ / ____ V-Code (from back): _____

Signature: _____ Phone: () _____

A. Artificial Wreath  \$60	B. Artificial Cross  \$50	C. Artificial Tree  \$50	D. Artificial Deluxe Holiday Mix  <small>*Vase not included</small> \$40	E. Artificial Poinsettia  <small>*Vase not included</small> \$25	F. Fresh Wreath  \$60	G. Fresh Grave Blanket  \$75	H. Artificial Niche Poinsettia  <small>*Vase not included</small> \$25
---	--	---	--	--	---	---	--

Fall-Winter Decoration Guidelines

Gravesites:

Appropriate artificial decorations may be placed Nov. 2 through March 31. Items such as grave blankets that cover the ground must be removed by March 1.

Vases:

We recommend that vases be left turned down in the cemeteries during the winter months.

Monuments:

Appropriate decorations may be placed year round on the base of an upright memorial as long as they do not interfere with the daily operations of the cemetery.

Mausoleums,

Crypts, Niches: Items can only be placed in or on an approved vase attached to a crypt or niche front. No items can be taped, wired or otherwise attached to the crypt or niche front. Fresh flowers are not permitted in a mausoleum, and will be promptly removed.

Inappropriate Items:

Items not conforming to Catholic Cemeteries' policies, items placed in the ground or those extending onto adjoining graves, crypts or niches will be removed without notice. Out of respect for our consecrated grounds, pets and smoking are not permitted.

If you have any questions regarding these policies, please contact the cemetery office at 402-391-3711.