

Consecrated Grounds

Preparing for Eternity

Spring 2026



Catholic Cemeteries
ARCHDIOCESE OF OMAHA

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

A Simple Step That Can Prevent Future Family Difficulties

Deacon Steve Hill, Director



We've recently had situations come up with more than a few of our families related to graves purchased several decades ago.

For example, imagine that Mr. and Mrs. Smith purchased burial rights for four graves in 1960 and had two children. Mr. Smith died in 1980 and was buried in one of the four graves. Mrs. Smith died in 1990 and was buried in another. However, before their passing, they never provided instructions to Catholic Cemeteries regarding who could be buried in the remaining two graves.

In many cases like this, the burial rights legally pass equally to the children. This means the two children would each own 50% of both the remaining two graves, rather than each owning one individual space. As a result, both children would need to agree before the graves could be used.

While this example is fairly simple and straightforward, situations can become more complicated. Now, what if Mr. and Mrs. Smith had six children, and those children had families of their own? Years later, the children may have died and were buried elsewhere, grandchildren may live across the country, and it may be difficult to locate everyone who now shares ownership of those burial rights. Yet Catholic Cemeteries must still receive proper legal authorization before a burial can take place.

Ownership of burial rights is a legal matter, and Catholic Cemeteries must follow the law when determining who can authorize use of the graves or provide instruction. Divorce, remarriage, family estrangement, or simply losing contact with relatives can all complicate the process.

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CatholicCem.com/Newsletter



From the Tree to the Cross

Deacon Jim Tardy, Outreach Manager

Perhaps some of you have heard me speak before about the connection between the wood of the Christmas tree, the wood of the manger, and the wood of the Cross of Good Friday and Holy Week. As we have now entered the season of Lent, I thought it might be good to again reflect on this connection.

This year marks the eleventh year that we will be praying the Stations of the Cross at Catholic Cemeteries. We gather on Wednesday evenings at 6 p.m. in Holy Angels Mausoleum at Resurrection Cemetery, and again on Good Friday at 3 p.m. at Calvary Cemetery, where we literally carry a cross for this 1.3-mile devotion.

Over time, this devotion has become more than symbolic. It becomes something lived – something experienced in a deeper way through the people I encounter along this journey of faith.

For me, the bond between these seasons begins with the longing of Advent and finds its fulfillment in the victory of Easter. In Advent we sing “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” longing and calling for the Lord’s coming. In Lent we solemnly ask, “Were you there when they crucified my Lord?” And then at Easter we proclaim the great and joyful “Alleluia!”

Have you ever thought about the connection between the wood of the Christmas tree and the manger, and the wood of the Cross? Each year I remind myself of this connection by hanging a very unusual ornament on my Christmas tree: a long nail tied with a red ribbon. Yes – a nail.

It reminds me that Christ was born in a wooden

manger and would one day give His life upon a wooden Cross. For me, it is now impossible to think of one without the other. Christ, the Son of God, was born into this world to die for our sins – and through His resurrection, opens for us the promise of eternal life.

During Advent we place a Christmas tree in Holy Angels Mausoleum and invite visitors to write a prayer of petition and hang it on the tree. We gather to pray, sing, and reflect together during those holy days of waiting and hope. This past Advent we received more than 350 petitions, which we later reverently buried within our consecrated grounds.

In Lent, a wooden Cross stands in the mausoleum. Once again, visitors are invited to bring their

prayers of petition – but this time they nail them to the Cross as we pray the Stations of the Cross together.

These practices remind us that our lives are part of a greater journey – the lifelong journey toward holiness. They remind us that we are invited to walk this path not alone, but with the God who created us, who loved us first, and with the redeeming Christ who calls us into eternal life with our loving Father in heaven.

These rituals also remind us of something profound: how finite we are, and how infinite God is.

My prayer for all of us is that we hear this call and respond to it – that we continue walking this journey with Christ, praying for one another, and moving forward in faith toward the life that awaits us with God the Father.





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 am to 4:45 pm Monday-Friday
9 am to 1 pm 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. during Daylight Savings 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
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- Samantha Lierz Memorials Representative
- Peggy Sjuts Memorials Representative
- Rachel Meyer Administrative Assistant
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- John Czeranko Caretaker, Holy Sepulchre
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A Simple Step That Can Prevent Future Family Difficulties

Continued from front

My wife and I have preplanned our burial plots and included additional spaces for our children and their spouses. Since we cannot know who may eventually wish to be buried with us, we have placed a document on file with Catholic Cemeteries outlining our wishes and identifying who is authorized to provide instruction to Catholic Cemeteries after we have passed.

If you feel your family might face a similar situation, we encourage you to reach out to us. We are here to help guide you through these questions – and they are always easier to address sooner rather than later.

Monthly Memorial Mass Now on Tuesdays

Come and pray with us at our monthly Mass, generally the first Tuesday of each month, held at Holy Angels Mausoleum in Resurrection Cemetery. We begin at 5 p.m. with a Rosary. We then pray specifically for our loved ones who were interred in one of our five Catholic Cemeteries during the prior month, as well as those interred during that month of the prior year. The Mass is then celebrated at 5:30 p.m. We would love to have you join us.



Mass Dates for the Remainder of 2026

April 7	May 5	June 2
July 7	August 4	September 1
October 13	November 3	December 1

Please direct questions to **Deacon Norm Tierney**.

Angel Donors Turn Loss into Love

By Peggy Sjuts, Memorials Representative

Within Calvary Cemetery, the Serenity section is dedicated to infants. The burial rights (the cost of the grave space), along with a portion of the interment fee for children less than one year old – including those lost through miscarriage or stillbirth – are waived.

Even with these accommodations, the cost of creating a memorial for a beloved child can still be difficult for some families.

In recent years, I have been blessed to witness a remarkable act of compassion through our Catholic Cemeteries Memorials Department. The Garcia family has become gracious “angel donors” in honor

of their son, Mateo, who is laid to rest in the Serenity section.

On several occasions, the Garcias have generously provided funds to create and install grave markers for families who would otherwise be unable to afford them, allowing those families to memorialize their children.

It has been humbling to assist in this process – to see the joy and generosity of the Garcia family, and the deep gratitude of the families who have received this gift. Through their kindness, grief and loss are being transformed into charity and love.

Upcoming Events at Catholic Cemeteries

Grief Workshop

“The ‘Way’ Through Grief” is a six-session grief workshop. This workshop uses the Stations of the Cross as a guide to help those struggling with the loss of a loved one. The next workshop will begin on Saturday, May 2 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Additional dates for 2026 are July 18 and November 14.

Please contact [Deacon Jim Tardy](#) to register or for more information.

Preplanning Workshop

Catholic Cemeteries offers small group presentations to provide clarity about:

- How the Rites of the Catholic Church are there to help us through these challenges.
- How preplanning at Catholic Cemeteries is a testament of your faith and a wonderful gift to your family.
- How Catholic Cemeteries’ perpetual care and ministries provide ongoing support in a way that no other cemetery in Omaha can.

The next workshop is Saturday, April 25 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Additional 2026 dates are June 27 and October 10.

Please contact [Deacon Jim Tardy](#) or [Lance Zimmerman](#) to register or for more information.



Thank You to Our Priests

Deacon Steve Hill, Director

My wife and I recently returned from a vacation to the Bahamas, including time on one of its smaller islands. The warmer weather was certainly welcome, especially since we left early the morning after receiving nearly ten inches of snow the night before!

While we were there, we walked to Holy Name Catholic Church for Sunday worship. The word Catholic means universal, reminding us that wherever we are in the world we can gather to celebrate the same Sunday liturgy. The local language may be different, but the prayers and the meaning are the same.

The island has only one Catholic church. It was a beautiful place of worship, and the people were very welcoming. Because the community is small, visitors are quickly recognized and warmly greeted.

We arrived expecting to celebrate Mass, but this small community does not always have access to a priest. Instead, their deacon led a Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest. We were grateful to still receive Jesus in the Eucharist that had been consecrated at a prior Mass.

This experience made me reflect on how blessed we are here in the Omaha metropolitan area. We have many parishes nearby and regular access to priests who faithfully celebrate the sacraments with us.

These men have given their lives to God and serve the people of the Archdiocese each day, encouraging us to live according to our baptismal call.

To all the priests of the Archdiocese of Omaha – thank you for answering God’s call to the priesthood.

Lenten Perseverance

Deacon Norm Tierney, Manager of Ministry



As I write this, we are about one month out from Easter. I hope your Lent has been fruitful so far. Now is NOT the time to slack

off – I encourage you to keep striving to achieve your Lenten goals! Maybe the world has tried to distract you, or the evil one has tried to tempt you away from God. Be strong and persevere! If your Lenten efforts started out strong, but you then got distracted through thought and worldly desires, know that there is still time to return to the ultimate and most important goal of having a deeper relationship with Christ.

How can we achieve this?

When Jesus was tempted in the desert by Satan, Jesus used the scriptures to counteract the attempts to sway him. Always turn to the scriptures to find strength and guidance in

times of trial. This is where we find God’s divine guidance in His inspired words to us. He also speaks to us in our time of silent prayer and contemplation, through the inspiration of His Holy Spirit.

As spring begins, we can see the foliage in the cemeteries changing from brown to green and the bushes and trees begin to bud. There is a freshness in the air that we feel all around us.

Let the last few weeks of Lent be a time where our souls can bud with a renewed sense of who we are. Let us look forward to the Lord’s resurrection on Easter Sunday, along with the blossoming of our own spiritual resurrection, recognizing we are precious children of God. We are not only His children, but also His partner in building up the Kingdom on earth every day.

Amen, and God Bless!

The People and Places of Holy Week

Rev. Michael Grewe, Executive Director



During this time around Holy Week and Easter our minds go to all the important events that took place, especially the sorrow of Good Friday and the joy of Easter Sunday. We also recall all the important people who had such significant roles – we think of Jesus,

of course, and his mother, Mary, the Apostles, and Mary Magdalene. These places and people are at the core of our faith and religion.

I find it interesting that our five Archdiocesan Cemeteries are named after many of the places and people of Holy Week. We think of our **Calvary Cemetery** and how the crucifixion took place at Mount Calvary outside of Jerusalem.

St. Mary's Cemetery reminds us of the holy Mother of God who witnessed the sorrow of the cross and the death of her Son.

Holy Sepulchre Cemetery takes our minds to the very tomb of Jesus. He died a human death like all of us, and the graves in our cemeteries remind us of our mortality.

Resurrection Cemetery calls to mind our Lord's victory over sin and death and the glory of that Easter morning. Our sculpture at the southeast corner of this cemetery is a beautiful display of that most significant moment!

St. Mary Magdalene Cemetery points to one of the first witnesses to the resurrection. Mary Magdalene didn't recognize Jesus at first, but when he spoke her name, she knew it was the risen Lord!

Each of our cemeteries certainly calls us back to Holy Week and the deepest tenets of our faith. Sometime, when you are at one of them, look around and take in the statues and art pieces. Have you noticed the painting of the Last Supper on our mausoleum in Calvary? Or have you reflected on the Stations of the Cross placed strategically around that cemetery? All these things are there to help us remember what Jesus did for us. He, too, died and was buried, but by rising from the dead he changed everything!

Yes, death can bring great sorrow to all of us, but during this springtime let's reflect on the hope that the Resurrection brings. The cemetery is only a temporary stopping point. The glory of God awaits us!



Time to Order Spring Flowers



Easter, Mother's Day, or Memorial Day Decorations Now Available from Our Online Store.

Three ways to order:

- Visit CatholicCem.com/Flowers or scan the QR code →
- Call 402-391-3711
- Complete and mail the order form on the reverse side



Spring Flower Decorations

We will begin taking flower orders for **Easter, Mother's Day** and **Memorial Day** on March 17. Flowers will be placed and removed as follows:

Easter – placement begins on April 2. Flowers must be picked up by April 12, or they will be removed and disposed of by the Cemetery on April 13.

Mother's Day – placement begins on May 7 and flowers must be picked up by May 17 or they will be removed and disposed of by the Cemetery on May 18.

Memorial Day – placement begins on May 21. Flowers must be picked up by May 31 or they will be removed and disposed of by the Cemetery on June 1.

In the Placement Period field below enter **"E"** for Easter, **"M"** for Mother's Day or **"MD"** for Memorial Day.

Holiday Decoration Guidelines.

Appropriate decorations may be placed on in-ground graves starting at noon on the Thursday prior to the following holidays: Easter, Mother's Day, Memorial Day, and Father's Day.

Decorations must be removed prior to gate closing on the Sunday following these holidays. Catholic Cemeteries will dispose of all artificial decorations starting on the following Monday.

Fourth of July decorations can be placed from July 1st through July 11th.

Spring – Fall Decoration Guidelines

Bill Barnes, Manager Memorials and Facilities

Gravesites

Only fresh flowers are permitted in permanent and approved in-ground vases from April 2nd through November 1st. Appropriate artificial decorations may be placed November 2nd through March 31st.

Vases

Certain cremation niches were not originally designed or intended to have cemetery-approved flower vases attached to the front cover. Unapproved vases are not to be attached and

will be removed without notice. In-ground vases should be left turned down in the cemeteries when not in use.

Monuments

Appropriate decorations may be placed year-round on the base of an upright memorial so 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 if found.

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.





Catholic Cemeteries
ARCHDIOCESE OF OMAHA







Complete form and mail to:
Catholic Cemeteries
7710 W Center Road, Omaha, NE 68124

Name of Deceased	Name of Cemetery	Placement Period	Item Number and 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: (____) _____

<p>A. Artificial Peony Tribute</p>  <p><small>*Vase not included</small> \$25</p>	<p>B. Artificial Patriotic Tribute</p>  <p><small>*Vase not included</small> \$25</p>	<p>C. Artificial Spring Tribute</p>  <p><small>*Vase not included</small> \$25</p>	<p>D. Artificial Large Cross</p>  <p><small>*Vase not included</small> \$40</p>
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<p>E. Artificial Deluxe Memorial Tribute</p>  <p><small>*Vase not included</small> \$35</p>	<p>F. Artificial Red Roses</p>  <p><small>*Vase not included</small> \$25</p>	<p>G. Artificial Crypt / Niche Bouquet</p>  <p><small>*Vase not included</small> \$25</p>	<p>H. Live Planter <small>*Only available for Memorial Day</small></p>  <p>Arranged in plastic container \$40</p>
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If you have any questions regarding these policies, please contact the cemetery office at 402-391-3711.