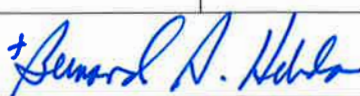
 <p>ARCHDIOCESE of SAINT PAUL & MINNEAPOLIS</p> <p><i>United in Faith, Hope and Love</i></p>	Issued Date:	Last Reviewed Date: October 11, 2019	Number: 213
	Subject: Parish Cemeteries and Columbaria		
	Scope: All Parishes		
	Reference:		Distribution: Posted on Website
Archbishop Signature: 			

I. Purpose

To address the administration of all cemeteries and Columbaria administered by a Parish in the Archdiocese Territory.

II. Definitions

“Annual Parish Financial Report” means that report required to be submitted annually to the Archdiocese within 120 days after the close of the fiscal year that contains the Parish financial statements and assessment calculation.

“Archbishop” means the sitting Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis (or the appointed Apostolic Administrator).

“Archdiocese” means that certain corporate entity formed, maintained and existing under Minnesota Section 315.16 with the Minnesota Business Name: “The Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis”.

“Archdiocese Territory” means the (12) counties of the greater Twin Cities metropolitan area: Ramsey, Hennepin, Washington, Dakota, Anoka, Carver, Wright, Scott, Chisago, LeSueur, Rice, and Goodhue; and those persons outside the geographical territory over whom the Archdiocese has the ability to direct or control.

“Columbaria” means a free-standing bank of niches located in a cemetery for the inurnment of cremated remains.

“Parish” means a Parish within the Archdiocese Territory that is Archdiocese-recognized as Catholic.

“Parish Finance Council” means a canonical consultative body established in a Parish in accordance with canon 537 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law and the policy of the Archdiocese, which provides consultation to the pastor from a cross-section of parishioners to share their thoughts and insights in service to the mission of a specific Parish.

“Parish Pastoral Council” means a canonical consultative body established in a Parish in accordance with canon 536 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law and the policy of the Archdiocese, which provides consultation to the Pastor from a cross-section of parishioners to share their thoughts and insights in service to the mission of a specific Parish.

“Pastor” means a Parish pastor or a parochial administrator, as the case may be.

“Vicar General” means the priest or auxiliary bishop appointed by the Archbishop as Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia.

III. Policy

A. CEMETERIES

- 1) Each cemetery should be dedicated and blessed as a sacred space according to appropriate liturgical ritual.
- 2) Minnesota Statute, Chapter 307.01, requires all cemeteries owned by religious corporations to be surveyed and a plat thereof made by the surveyor; further, the law requires this plat to be filed with the County Recorder of the county in which the cemetery is located. (This procedure is sometimes described as the “civil dedication” of a cemetery.) The language of the statute makes the preparation and filing of this plat mandatory. In addition, the filing is necessary to preserve the exemption enjoyed by religious cemeteries from assessments for local improvements such as abutting public road, water and sewer installations.
- 3) If not already completed, it is recommended a competent real estate attorney be engaged to arrange for this platting and filing to be certain the details of this law are satisfied.
- 4) It is recommended that each Parish adopt rules and regulations for its cemetery. Rules and regulations should be readily accessible to the public.
- 5) It is recommended that the cemetery administered by a Parish be publically identified with appropriate signage including the name of the cemetery, the name of the associated Parish, and a manner for contacting the Parish.
- 6) The record of burials in the cemetery must be kept up to date and a cemetery plat should be readily accessible to the public. For security purposes, cemetery records should be physically located in a secure container and maintained at the Parish.
- 7) Cemetery funds must not be commingled with other Parish funds and must be reported on the Annual Parish Financial Report to the Archdiocese. Cemetery funds may not under any circumstances be used or borrowed by the Parish for any purpose unrelated to the Cemetery.
- 8) All cemetery transactions must be documented and receipted, including the sale of burial rights and the acceptance of funds for any related cemetery service.
- 9) The Minnesota laws of cemetery descendency (MN Statute 525.14) are to be followed in order to ensure lot ownership is properly determined and proper authorization is given for the burial of persons on a respective cemetery lot.
- 10) While the cemetery may have its own board or committee (Board) for its operation, all properties and funds belong to the Parish. The Pastor must be a member of the cemetery

Board, if one is formed, and must be a signor on all cemetery accounts. It is recommended that the cemetery Board operate in accord with the standards established for other Parish ministries and report to a designated Parish body, e.g. the Parish Pastoral Council or Parish Finance Council. The cemetery Board should meet at least annually and be presented with fiscal year accounting for the cemetery for review. It may be necessary to meet more frequently based on cemetery needs.

- 11) When full body interments are made, burial permits must be obtained from the state; the applicable funeral director normally delivers these at the time of burial.

B. COLUMBARIA

- 1) Columbaria may not be constructed within Parish church buildings or other sacred spaces designated for divine worship. Columbaria are to be treated in the same manner as cemeteries regarding liturgical use.
- 2) A Parish may not have a Columbaria without a cemetery. The cemetery must provide options for the burial of both bodily remains and cremated remains.

C. APPROPRIATE BURIAL PRACTICES AND TREATMENT OF CREMATED REMAINS

- 1) Out of respect for the dignity of the body, deceased members of the Christian faithful should be buried in a sacred space or gravesite that has been blessed.
- 2) In the case of cremated remains, the remains are to be treated with the same dignity as the body, and so may not be divided into separate receptacles and buried in multiple locations. Cremated remains may not be commingled with the remains of another person. Cremated remains may not be scattered or retained outside of a legitimate burial place.

D. PROVISION OF PERPETUAL CARE AND MAINTENANCE

- 1) Given the fact that cemeteries are sacred grounds for the burial of the dead, they should be cared for with dignity, thus implying a moral obligation to maintain cemeteries. Cemeteries administered by a Parish should always be properly maintained to reflect respect for our honored deceased.
- 2) All Parish cemeteries must maintain a perpetual care fund.

E. RESOURCES FOR CEMETERY QUESTIONS

The Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese can be a resource for responding to cemetery questions. The Office of the Chancellor for Civil Affairs can also provide some assistance on cemetery needs.