



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER MEMORANDUM

To: Pastors/Administrators, Cemetery Directors, Cemetery Record Keepers, and Staff
From: David Gabert
Date: October 12, 2022
RE: All Saints Day, All Souls Day, and the Importance of Catholic Cemeteries

I do hope all is well. As you know, All Saints Day and All Souls Day are times to remember the faithfully departed and to pray for them. On and around the time of these important days in the Catholic Church, individuals are thinking of their deceased loved ones and visiting the cemeteries to pray for and mourn their family and friends.

As you prepare for these days, in addition to reminding the faithful of the sacred obligation to commemorate and pray for the deceased souls, it is an opportunity to remind them of the Catholic Funeral Rite and the important role the Catholic cemeteries have within the Catholic Church.

The Diocese of Manchester has 74 Catholic cemeteries located throughout the entire State of New Hampshire, dedicated as sacred ground, and continue to be the resting places of hundreds of thousands of our beloved faithfully departed. Most of our Catholic cemeteries still have plenty of room for future burials and remain ready to provide a resting place for your parishioners.

If you have a cemetery, please consider reminding the parishioners of the importance of burial in sacred ground and in particular the parish Catholic cemetery. If you don't have a parish cemetery, there is likely one near you. I have attached a link listing all the cemeteries within the Diocese [[Directory - Diocese of Manchester \(catholicnh.org\)](http://www.catholicnh.org)]. I am sure you will find one near you! When reminding the parishioners of the importance of the Catholic Funeral Rite and the Catholic cemeteries please consider including the following regarding committal and the importance:

- ✓ of all three (3) parts of the funeral rite – including the committal;
- ✓ of being memorialized;
- ✓ of being buried in sacred ground;
- ✓ of keeping the body in-tact (spreading ashes is not allowed);
- ✓ of praying for our deceased loved ones including at Catholic cemeteries;
- ✓ of the Corporal Work of Mercy to bury the dead properly in sacred ground;
- ✓ of the Spiritual Work of Mercy to pray for the dead;
- ✓ of consoling family members with deceased loved ones;
- ✓ of acknowledging that being buried in a Catholic cemetery is coming full circle for Catholics, from baptism to death to resurrection (new life); and
- ✓ of reminding the faithful that Catholic cemeteries are an extension of the Church and we need their help to keep them sacred and holy.



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Finally, Roman Catholic Cemeteries are more than burial grounds; they are places of worship, prayer and meditation, and monuments to our faith and witness to life everlasting. They are places where individuals come not only to mourn their deceased family and friends but to find hope and peace.

I do hope you take the opportunity this year to mention the local Catholic cemetery to your parishioners. As always, I stand ready to answer questions you have regarding Catholic cemeteries. Feel free to call me directly at (603) 663-0191 or email at dgabert@rcbm.org.