

DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER MEMORANDUM

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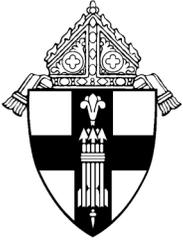
To: Pastors with Cemeteries, Directors of Cemeteries, and Business Managers of Cemeteries
From: David Gabert, Director of Cemetery Operations
Date: March 25, 2020
RE: Update 2 - Cemetery Operations and the Coronavirus Pandemic

I do hope this update finds you well. As mentioned in a previous communication, it is imperative that we follow not only the guidelines being promoted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) via the following link <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#funerals>], but also the directives being communicated by our Bishop and other government officials.

On March 24, 2020, the governor of the State of New Hampshire issued a directive prohibiting all gatherings of 10 people or more. This emergency order can be found via this link <https://www.governor.nh.gov/news-media/emergency-orders/documents/emergency-order-16.pdf>. This prohibition includes “faith based” and “spiritual” activities and can be enforced by “State or local police.”

With this in mind, I offer the following for cemetery personnel continuing in their ministries

- Ensure that committal services are graveside only and **not** take place indoors in our cemetery chapels;
- Outdoor graveside services are for the immediate family only and for no more than 9 individuals;
- Remind guests to maintain 6 feet from each other and remind staff to maintain this distance from funeral home personnel and mourners;
- Limit lot sale presentations to “at need only” while keeping a 6 foot distance and encourage on-line or phone arrangements;
- Suspend pre-need sales of lots and memorials unless they can be conducted on-line or by phone;
- Limit public access to cemetery offices and other indoor facilities;
- Continue wiping down surfaces, credit cards, pens, the interior of vehicles, equipment, tools and etc;
- Continue to wash hands frequently (for at least 20 seconds or 2 Hail Mary’s) , especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food;
- Keep families and staff informed – both those who already have services scheduled and as new services are scheduled – as additional restrictions and limitations are implemented by the Bishop and government officials;
- Wear gloves when handling a casket, equipment, burial permits, lot licenses, body receipts, payment, and when opening mail;
- Limit staff from riding in vehicles together – including cemetery trucks and other vehicles;



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- Ensure that your staff has read and understands the CDC guidelines and the State of New Hampshire executive orders, and;
- For our larger cemeteries schedule staff in rotating shifts, with one group staying home to ensure coverage in the event of staff illness.

I ask that you pass this communication onto all individuals working in our cemeteries including independent contractors as well as to your local funeral homes. While this is a difficult time for all of us, we remember that we are a community of faith, and together we will get through these difficult times. Let us continue to pray for all those affected by this virus.

As always, don't hesitate to call or e-mail any questions or concerns – I am happy to help!