



DIOCESE OF MANCHESTER MEMORANDUM

To: Pastors/Administrators, Cemetery Directors, Cemetery Record Keepers, and Staff
From: David Gabert
Date: October 1, 2025
RE: Catholic Cemeteries – Materials to Present and Distribute October & November 2025

The Diocese of Manchester Cemetery Office is pleased to announce the 2025 campaign to remind Catholics of the importance of Catholic cemeteries within the tradition and mission of the Catholic Church. Along with this memo please find the following:

- 1) **Talking Points** on the importance of Catholic cemeteries to be used for presentations, homilies, articles, bulletins, religious education classes, and/or local cemetery promotions.
- 2) **Resources, Educational Materials, and Links** that can be used for homilies/presentations, curriculum, and to promote related topics (this information is within the same document as the Talking Points).
- 3) **Flyers** to be handed out, placed at the back of Churches, and posted in conspicuous locations.

All parishes are encouraged to be involved in this effort. Flyers can be posted and set in the back of the church as soon as possible. It is suggested that homilies and presentations take place around All Saints and All Souls Days, preferably on October 25/26 or November 1/2. Parishes without a cemetery are encouraged to support and present on the cemeteries in their deanery.

The message should be focused on identifying and making the public aware that there is a Catholic cemetery near them, that the Church prefers Catholics be *buried* in a Catholic cemetery or in a nondenominational cemetery, the importance of prayer for our deceased loved ones, our belief in the resurrection and sacred dignity of the body, the proper burial of the body, burying cremains completely intact within a proper nonbiodegradable urn, and memorializing our loved ones. The attached talking points include these and other important points. Resources and Educational Materials can be used for Faith Formation at any time. There are resources included for specific classes on All Souls Day as well as on the importance of Catholic cemeteries.

For further information and/or assistance, please contact the Catholic Cemetery Office at (603) 663-0191 or email at dgabert@rcbm.org. Thank you for supporting and promoting the importance of Catholic Cemeteries.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

TALKING POINTS FOR PRESENTATIONS AND HOMILIES

The Talking Points below can be used for any presentation, homily, article, bulletin, religious education program/curriculum and cemetery specific promotion (e.g. cemetery specific brochures) on the importance of Catholic Cemeteries within the Catholic Church. This document also provides talking points for parishes with local cemeteries. They can be used in conjunction with the attached flyer.

Message from the Bishop:

“The Roman Catholic Church in New Hampshire has set aside Roman Catholic Cemeteries located throughout the State of New Hampshire as sacred ground for the resting places of the faithful when they die. Roman Catholic Cemeteries are more than burial grounds...” said Bishop Peter A. Libasci, D.D. “The Catholic cemetery is consecrated to mark that history, that presence, the very person God will always know, but others often forget. When we visit, look, read and pause to pray, one who is beloved of God tells his or her story once again.”

Why Choose a Catholic Cemetery?

- To honor the sacredness of the body and because of our belief that the body will be raised incorruptible, the Christian tradition, beginning with the Catacombs of Rome, has been to bury and memorialize the faithful departed by honoring the body with interment in the sacred ground of a Catholic cemetery, or other cemeteries established for the burial/interment of human remains.
- **There are 66 Catholic cemeteries in New Hampshire.** See www.catholicnh.org/cemeteries to locate one near you. In addition to the website, the reverse side of the flyer has a listing of all the Catholic cemeteries in New Hampshire.
- For Christians, in death life is changed; not ended. In death, the soul departs the body and enters into everlasting life. A Catholic cemetery gives an honorable resting place to the body until the Last Day when Christ will raise the dead to share body and soul in the Resurrected Life.
- Catholic cemeteries give witness to our faith and hope in the resurrection of the dead.
- Catholic cemeteries, like churches, are consecrated and set apart to be places where the faithful gather to pray, to worship, and to be consoled by the peace of the Lord as they remember the souls of the faithful departed and hope for their eternal rest.
- Catholic cemeteries offer a peaceful location to fulfill the Spiritual Work of Mercy of praying for the dead.
- Catholic cemeteries provide parishioners the opportunity to come full circle at their parish – from baptism, to death, to everlasting life and the resurrection of the body.

The Catholic Funeral Rite:

- All Catholics, Catechumens, and Christians are entitled to the **Rite of Christian Burial celebrated in three parts: Vigil, Funeral Mass, and Committal (preferably in a Catholic Cemetery or other nondenominational cemetery)**. For more information on the Catholic Funeral Rite go to www.catholicnh.org/funeral-rites.

Why Catholics Bury Their Loved Ones:

- In earlier days when Catholic communities were small, many parishes had burial grounds right on the church property. **The purpose was to know that the dead are still very much part of our parish family.** This is why we have always prayed for the dead in every Mass celebrated in our parish church. As parishes grew, it was no longer possible to surround the parish church with the graves of the faithful. Therefore, separate properties were purchased by parishes to accommodate the faithful departed of the parish.
- In a very real way, it is a more complete gathering of the parish family and the family of the Church when we recall and continue the practice of caring for our beloved dead.
- Respect for human life necessarily includes respect for the body. **Created in the image and likeness of God, every human has inherent dignity and worth, and is a unity of body and soul.**
- A proper Christian burial (preferably in a Catholic cemetery) and memorialization (inscription on a monument or marker) of the deceased person demonstrates respect for the life, the body, and soul.
- The Corporal Work of Mercy of burying the dead requires burying the dead with respect and reverence for the body/cremated remains as well as performing maintenance and improvements of the cemetery where the dead are interred.

Cremations:

- While cremation may be chosen for sufficient reasons, it is preferable to honor the body with the Mass of Christian Burial with cremation to follow the Funeral Mass. The Revised Code of Canon Law states: “The Church earnestly recommends the pious custom of burial be retained; but it does not forbid cremation, unless this is chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching.” (CIC, c. 1176.3).
- While burial/interment or entombment of the body remains the preference and is encouraged by the Church, Catholic cemeteries offer locations for the interment of cremated remains either in existing graves/lots, in separate cremation gardens, or in columbaria.
- In order to give proper respect for the dignity of the bodily remains, cremated remains are to be interred completely **intact within a nonbiodegradable urn; without scattering, separating to be encased in jewelry, or dividing so as to have multiple burial sites.**

Burial/Interment Options in the Diocese of Manchester:

- Catholic cemeteries in the Diocese of Manchester offer full body burials/interment, as well as burials/interment of cremated remains either in existing graves/lots, in separate cremation gardens, or outdoor columbaria (above ground).
- There are also options in the Manchester area for full body burial (entombment) and the interment of cremated remains indoors in a parish community mausoleum. Private family mausoleums (crypts) can also be made available.
- The Diocese will soon be offering the option for the interment of cremated remains in an indoor columbarium in a church building in the central region of New Hampshire.
- For more information on Catholic burial/interment options in New Hampshire, contact the Diocese of Manchester Catholic Cemetery Office: David A. Gabert, Director of Cemetery Operations at dgabert@rcbm.org or (603) 663-0191.

Local Message (in addition to the talking points listed above):

- Provide the history of your parish cemetery (or cemetery in your deanery), its location, and contact information. List the cemetery's beneficial features (including location, prayerful setting, etc.).
- Encourage volunteers to assist in cemetery activities, in cemetery improvement projects, in praying for our deceased loved ones at the cemetery, and in serving on bereavement committees.
- Encourage donations for cemetery capital improvements, encourage parishioners to buy a lot in their parish cemetery (or in deanery), and offer pre-need sales of lots.
- Consider discounting prices to purchase a lot around Memorial Day/All Souls' Day or a discount for purchasing a lot within a set timeframe.
- Distribute cemetery specific brochures if available.

RESOURCES FOR HOMILIES AND EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL ON THE IMPORTANCE OF CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

Resources for Homilies and Educational Aides: In addition to the Talking Points, the Homilies and Educational Aides, the Catholic Burial Traditions Website offers a plethora of material regarding Catholic burial and the importance of Catholic cemeteries. This free website is sponsored by the Catholic Cemetery Conference. All materials found on this website can be used with no charge to the parish. The following is the link to this website: <https://catholicburialtraditions.org/educational-aids>.

Once logged into this website, they offer videos, printable materials, and audio information on Homilies, Educational Aides, and Marketing Materials on the importance of Catholic cemeteries within the Catholic tradition, on All Souls Day, and other related topics. The marketing materials can be used to create pamphlets, bulletin inserts, and other promotional materials for the parish cemetery. The educational aides on the Catholic Burial Traditions Website can also be used for religious education programs and curriculum for all ages.

Other Related Resources and Links:

- For Resources for staff and to view a video on the Importance of Catholic Cemeteries go to Diocese of Manchester Cemetery Website and scroll down: www.catholicnh.org/catholic-cemeteries
- For more information on the Catholic Funeral Rite: www.catholicnh.org/funeral-rites
- Find all the Catholic cemeteries in New Hampshire on the reverse side of the flyer and at: www.catholicnh.org/cemeteries
- Diocese of Manchester Cemetery Rules and Regulations: www.catholicnh.org/assets/Documents/Parishes/Burials/CemeteryRulesRegulations.pdf
- Guide to End-of-Life Decisions – Three Beliefs: www.catholicnh.org/threebeliefs

Contact Information:

- For more information on Catholic cemeteries contact the Diocese of Manchester Catholic Cemetery Office: David A. Gabert, Director of Cemetery Operations at dgabert@rcbm.org or (603) 663-0191.



Diocese of Manchester



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CATHOLIC CEMETERIES - DID YOU KNOW?

- There are **66 Catholic cemeteries in New Hampshire** (please see reverse side for one near you).
- Catholics are entitled to the three-part **Funeral Rite: Vigil (Wake), Funeral Mass, and Committal**. For more information on the Funeral Rite go to: catholicnh.org/funeral-rites
- Catholic cemeteries provide locations for both full body burials and burial of cremated remains.

WITNESSES TO EVERLASTING LIFE

- Death is not the end! Respect for the person necessarily includes respect for the body.
- The Church prefers Catholics be buried and memorialized in a Catholic cemetery or on sacred ground **and recommends that the pious custom of full body burial be retained.**
- Cremation is not forbidden, but out of respect for the dignity of the body, cremated remains are to be buried intact; memorialized, and **without scattering, separating, combining, dividing, or encased in jewelry.**

MONUMENTS OF HOPE AND PEACE

- Catholic cemeteries represent our shared hope in the resurrection of the body.
- Burying the dead fulfills a **Corporal Work of Mercy**, while Catholic cemeteries provide a place to pray for the dead and fulfill the **Spiritual Work of Mercy.**

RESOURCES: Diocese of Manchester - catholicnh.org/catholic-cemeteries and catholicnh.org/funeral-rites

Video on Catholic Cemeteries - Monuments of Hope and Peace, visit youtube.com/catholicnh and click on the Featured Playlist

Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decisions – Three Beliefs: catholicnh.org/threebeliefs

Contact David A. Gabert, Director of Cemetery Operations, dgabert@rcbm.org, (603) 663-0191

For purchasing lots or pre-need planning, volunteering, and other questions, contact a local cemetery listed on the reverse side.

CATHOLIC CEMETERIES IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

All phone numbers begin with the (603) area code.

AMHERST • St. Patrick Cemetery
673-1311 • St. Patrick Parish

BARTLETT • St. Joseph Cemetery
356-2535 • Our Lady of the
Mountains Parish

BATH • St. Joseph Cemetery
747-2038 • St. Joseph Parish

BEDFORD St. Joseph Cemetery
622-9522 St. Joseph Cathedral Parish

BEDFORD • St. Hedwig Cemetery
623-4835 • St. Hedwig Parish

BENNINGTON • Mount Calvary Cemetery
924-7647 • Divine Mercy Parish

BERLIN • Calvary Cemetery
752-2880 • Good Shepherd Parish

BERLIN • St. Anne Cemetery
752-2880 • Good Shepherd Parish

BERLIN • St. Kieran Cemetery
752-2880 • Good Shepherd Parish

BERLIN • Mount Calvary Cemetery
752-2880 • Berlin Good Shepherd Parish

CARROLL (Twin Mountain)
St. Margaret Cemetery
788-2083 • Gate of Heaven Parish

CHARLESTOWN
St. Catherine Cemetery
826-3359 • All Saints Parish

CLAREMONT • St. Mary Cemetery
542-9518 • St. Mary Parish

COLEBROOK • St. Brendan Cemetery
237-4342 • North American
Martyrs Parish

DOVER • St. Charles Cemetery
742-4837 • Parish of the Assumption

DOVER • St. Mary Cemetery
742-4837 • Parish of the Assumption

DREWSVILLE • St. Peter Cemetery
826-3359 • All Saints Parish

EPPING • St. Joseph Cemetery
679-8805 • St. Joseph Parish

ERROL • St. Pius Forest Lawn Cemetery
237-4342 • North American
Martyrs Parish

FRANKLIN • Holy Cross Cemetery
934-5013 • St. Gabriel Parish

GNIC • Mount Calvary Cemetery
332-1863 • St. Leo Parish

GORHAM • Holy Family Cemetery
752-2880 • Holy Family Parish

GROVETON • St. Francis Xavier Cemetery
636-1047 • St. Marguerite
d'Youville Parish

HARRISVILLE • St. Denis Cemetery
924-7647 • Divine Mercy Parish

HILLSBOROUGH • St. Mary Cemetery
428-3325 • St. Mary Parish

HINSDALE • St. Joseph Cemetery
352-3525 • Parish of the Holy Spirit

HOOKSETT • Holy Rosary Cemetery
485-3523 • Holy Rosary Parish

HUDSON • Holy Cross Cemetery
881-8131 • St. Patrick Parish

HUDSON • St. Patrick Cemetery
881-8131 • St. Patrick Parish

JAFFREY • St. Patrick Cemetery
532-6634 • St. Patrick Parish

KEENE • St. Joseph Cemetery
352-3525 • Parish of the Holy Spirit

LACONIA • Sacred Heart Cemetery
524-9609 • St. André Bessette Parish

LACONIA • St. Lambert Cemetery
524-9609 • St. André Bessette Parish

LANCASTER • All Saints Cemetery
788-2083 • Gate of Heaven Parish

LANCASTER • Calvary Cemetery
788-2083 • Gate of Heaven Parish

LITTLETON • St. Rose of Lima Cemetery
444-2593 • St. Rose of Lima Parish

LONDONDERRY • Holy Cross Cemetery
622-3215 • Ste. Marie Parish

MANCHESTER • Mount Calvary Cemetery
622-3215 • Ste. Marie Parish

MANCHESTER • St. Augustin Cemetery
623-8809 • St. Anne - St. Augustin Parish

MARLBOROUGH • Mount Calvary Cemetery
352-3525 • Parish of the Holy Spirit

NASHUA • St. Francis Xavier Cemetery
886-1302 • St. Aloysius
of Gonzaga Parish

NASHUA • St. Louis de Gonzague Cemetery
886-1302 • St. Aloysius
of Gonzaga Parish

NASHUA • St. Stanislaus Cemetery
886-1302 • St. Aloysius
of Gonzaga Parish

NEW IPSWICH • Sacred Heart of
Jesus Cemetery
878-1121 • Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish

NEWMARKET • Calvary Cemetery
659-3344 • St. Mary Parish

NEWPORT • St. Patrick Cemetery
863-1422 • St. Patrick Parish

NORTH CONWAY • Our Lady of the
Mountains Cemetery
356-2535 • Our Lady of the
Mountains Parish

NORTH STRATFORD
Sacred Heart Cemetery
636-1047 • St. Marguerite
d'Youville Parish

PENACOOK • Calvary Cemetery
753-4413 • Immaculate Conception Parish

PETERBOROUGH • St. Peter Cemetery
924-7647 • Divine Mercy Parish

PITTSFIELD • Mount Calvary Cemetery
435-6242 • Our Lady of Lourdes Parish

PLAISTOW • Holy Angels Cemetery
382-8324 • St. Luke the Evangelist Parish

PORTSMOUTH • Calvary Cemetery
436-9239 • Corpus Christi Parish

PORTSMOUTH • St. Mary Cemetery
436-9239 • Corpus Christi Parish

ROCHESTER • Holy Rosary Cemetery
332-1863 • Our Lady of the
Holy Rosary Parish

ROCHESTER • St. Mary Cemetery
332-1869 • St. Mary Parish

ROLLINSFORD • St. Patrick Cemetery
692-0524 • St. Mary Parish

SANBORNVILLE • Mount Calvary Cemetery
522-3304 • St. Anthony Parish

SOMERSWORTH • Holy Trinity Cemetery
692-0524 • St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish

SOMERSWORTH
Mount Calvary Cemetery
692-0524 • St. Ignatius of Loyola Parish

SUNCOOK • St. John the Baptist Cemetery
485-3113 • St. John the Baptist Parish

TILTON • St. John Cemetery
934-5013 • St. Gabriel Parish

TROY • Mount Carmel Cemetery
352-3525 • Parish of the Holy Spirit

WEST STEWARTSTOWN
St. Albert Cemetery
237-4342 • North American
Martyrs Parish

WHITEFIELD • St. Matthew Cemetery
788-2083 • Gate of Heaven Parish

WILTON • Mount Calvary Cemetery
878-1121 • Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish