

Questions & Answers for Parishes on the Establishment of the Catholic Parish Cemeteries Association of the Diocese of Pittsburgh (CPCA)

- 1. Q. Who will own the cemetery?**

A. The cemetery will continue to be owned by the parish and will operate under a long term management/license agreement with a newly formed non-profit corporation, Catholic Parish Cemeteries Association (CPCA).
- 2. Q. Will the compensation of employees be affected?**

A. The current salaries or hourly rates of existing personnel involved in on-site care and maintenance of our cemetery properties were built into the budget for CPCA. Current salaries and hourly rates will remain the same for year one. CPCA has budgeted increases for years two and three where warranted.
- 3. Q. I have a cemetery manager in place. What happens to him/her? Will he/she still manage the cemetery?**

A. Yes, he/she will still manage the cemetery and report to a Regional Manager of CPCA.
- 4. Q. How much information can I share with my parish now?**

A. You are encouraged to share this information with anyone you deem appropriate. We want all concerned to get the correct information as opposed to misinformed rumors.
- 5. Q. If the parish that owns the cemetery no longer exists, who then is the owner of the cemetery?**

A. As is the case with all parish mergers, responsibility for the cemetery becomes the responsibility of the parish (new or existing) within whose territory the cemetery property is located.
- 6. Q. If a cemetery is operating well, why take its management from the parish?**

A. This model for our parish cemeteries is part of the larger picture, looking into the future and making decisions which will strengthen our diocese and benefit the common good of all our parishes. Therefore, all parish cemeteries have to be included in the new management model.
- 7. Q. What will happen to shared utilities arrangements?**

A. During the transition, some shared arrangements may continue until the management of CPCA can make other arrangements such as having the utilities separated, if practical. In some situations it may make more sense for CPCA to reimburse the parish for some shared arrangements. These situations will be evaluated and discussed with the pastor or business manager and a mutually agreed upon solution will be implemented.
- 8. Q. How will shared employees and shared maintenance between parish and cemetery be handled in the new model?**

A. In the long run it is preferable not to have shared employees due to the complications it creates with payroll and benefits issues. In the short term, some crossover may have to continue until a more permanent arrangement can be worked out. In these cases, CPCA and the diocesan payroll office will work one on one with the parish to work out an agreeable solution. It is likewise preferable not to share equipment, maintenance, etc. with the parish. CPCA will work with the individual parishes to address such arrangements going forward.

- 9. Q. Will the parish keep the equipment it purchased?**
- A. We expect to look at some specific arrangements on a case by case basis. Generally speaking, if a piece of equipment was purchased with parish money and is used by the parish it will remain with the parish. There may have to be a short transition period during which the parish and cemetery continue to share the equipment until it can be replaced by the cemetery.
- 10. Q. Will current prices for services at cemeteries remain or be standardized?**
- A. Over time they will be standardized.
- 11. Q. Our parish cemetery has contracts with third party vendors for cemetery services. What will happen to these arrangements?**
- A. If you already have a third party contract in place for various cemetery services, it will remain in place as long as it is a benefit to the cemetery operation. CPCA will be in contact with all third party providers, whose information you provide to us in the survey, to discuss the current arrangements and make provisions for them to continue.
- 12. Q. Once the parish enters into a management/license agreement with CPCA, what will be the ongoing financial responsibility of the parish for cemetery-related needs (i.e.: collecting donations, paving, roofs, etc.)?**
- A. You are free to decide if any special cemetery collection you have in your parish should continue. If such collections continue, the proceeds will be used to benefit the operation of your specific cemetery location but will be managed by CPCA. With regard to capital expenditures such as roof repairs, road repairs, etc., CPCA will be responsible for all such expenses pursuant to the terms of the management/license agreement going forward.
- 13. Q. What happens with the Perpetual Care Collection in church?**
- A. There will be no need to continue this collection and there are no plans for a diocesan collection to replace it.
- 14. Q. Who will sell the graves?**
- A. There will be a service agreement in place with The Catholic Cemeteries Association (CCA) to provide sales and marketing services to the properties managed by CPCA. The CCA already provides such services to some of our parish cemeteries that have requested it.
- 15. Q. Will CPCA sell monuments and markers?**
- A. Yes. Increasing cemetery revenue is an important source of additional funding for the improvement of the cemetery properties and the perpetual care accounts.
- 16. Q. Washington and Greene counties are scheduled to transition in January 2017. What is the overall timeframe?**
- A. We plan to complete all transitions into CPCA by end of 2017 and prior to the On Mission changes. More specific information about the timeline is found in the summary that was presented at the priests meeting.
- 17. Q. Are the regional centers overseeing territory strictly by county line?**
- A. For now they fall generally in line according to counties, but as things come together, it may make sense to associate one or more properties with another regional center if they are close to a county line and the territory of another center, but this would be the exception.

- 18. Q. Will families need to go to one of the regional centers to make their purchase or arrangements?**
- A. No, they will be either handled at the funeral home or the family will be met at the cemetery or in their home, if necessary.
- 19. Q. With maps, records etc. all moved to the regional center, how will information be communicated to the cemetery workers?**
- A. There are many new technologies that are currently being reviewed for communicating information from the administrative centers to the field personnel such as computer tablets, iPhones, scanning, Fax, etc. There are many new cemetery software programs that also may be used.
- 20. Q. Do I need to obtain approval from the parish pastoral council or finance committee for this? I also think it is important to keep the cemetery name and not change it.**
- A. Approval of parish advisory councils is not necessary; however you can inform them of what is taking place. Also, we do not intend to change the name of any cemetery. It is very important for a number of reasons to always connect the cemetery location to its originating parish, even if that parish no longer exists.
- 21. Q. Once all graves have been sold, will the opening and closing fees increase to cover expenses of the cemetery?**
- A. Generally speaking, service fees should keep pace with their true market value and be adjusted on a regular basis. If this is the case, there would be no reason to increase such fees just because there is no more inventory to sell. Once there is no more inventory to sell AND there are no more burials being made, then the cemetery would fall into the "maintenance only" mode and be supported by its perpetual care fund.
- 22. Q. Are there any thoughts of creating and adding new parish cemeteries?**
- A. No. We are not considering any new parish cemetery locations.
- 23. Q. Will CPCA be able to sell property, products and services on a pre-need basis?**
- A. Yes. Since the CCA will be responsible for all of the trust accounting for the new diocesan corporation, we are assured that all trusting requirements for pre-need sales will be met. Pre-need sales in parish cemeteries were discontinued many years ago because most parishes were not capable of complying with the complicated trusting requirements for the sale of pre-need merchandise.
- 24. Q. Should we just keep functioning the cemetery now "as is" until further notice?**
- A. Yes, and if you should have any questions about unusual issues that may come up between now and the transition of your cemetery, please call Annabelle McGannon at 412-680-0492.