

RULES, REGULATIONS, AND POLICIES FOR THE CEMETERIES AND MAUSOLEUMS IN THE CLUSTER OF EAST SAINT JAMES

I. INTRODUCTION

1. These Rules, Regulations, and Policies are for the perpetual preservation of our cemeteries, to maintain a dignified, beautiful and inspiring atmosphere for our visitors, which respects our deceased loved ones, and provides safety for everyone both on and outside of the properties.
2. These Rules, Regulations, and Policies seek to direct what is allowed or not allowed within the cemeteries and mausoleums of the tri-parish cluster; they are not written to unduly restrict, restrain or regiment the rights of anyone to enjoy the benefits of using our cemeteries and mausoleums.

Please Note: *We acknowledge at the outset that some previously presumed freedoms might be curtailed in order to provide for the good of all persons within our properties.*

3. These Rules, Regulations, and Policies have been adopted and will be carefully observed and enforced and will be changed only if and when the necessity should arise. They shall apply not only to those who own the right to interment, but also to the visitors, employees, and any others who may enter the grounds.

II. COMPLIANCE

1. The Cemeteries and Mausoleums of St. Joseph, St. Michael, and St. Mary operate in compliance with the Rules and Regulations of the Louisiana Cemetery Board (www.lcb.state.la.us). The particular Rules, Regulations, and Policies herein follow the obligations of ownership and operation of cemeteries within the State of Louisiana.
2. The Cemetery Authority¹ possesses the right to require all persons entering any of their cemeteries, and all persons within each cemetery, to comply with all the Rules, Regulations and Policies stated below.

Please read footnotes as you proceed through this document. They offer explanation and clarification to the rules and policies.

¹ Refer to **III. Definitions, 2**, p. 2.

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III. DEFINITIONS

1. CEMETERY:
 - A. St Michael, St Mary, and St Joseph Cemetery and Mausoleums¹, including the developed and undeveloped areas, walkways and roadways, all within the perimeters of the property.
 - B. Also, those persons who in practicality run the services of the various cemeteries.
2. CEMETERY AUTHORITY: The Pastor of the three church parishes, acting in consultation with the Pastoral Councils and the appropriate commissions and committees of the parishes.
3. OWNER: The person (or persons) possessing any right of interment within the cemetery, as listed on a legitimate deed, or by proof of inheritance of a legitimate deed.
4. PLOT: A defined parcel of ground designed for the burial of human remains.
5. VAULT: A cement structure for placement of human remains in a ground plot.
6. CRYPT: A designated space within a mausoleum designed for the burial of human remains.
7. NICHE: A mausoleum crypt designed for the burial of human *cremains* (cremated remains).
8. TOMB: An historical mausoleum for private or family use able to house multiple coffins and human remains.
9. MEMORIAL:
 - A. Any ground vault, private tomb, or family tomb in the cemetery; any crypt, (or crypts)², or niche in the mausoleum.
 - B. Any lot (with or without a marker), plot, monument, or in-ground burial in the cemetery.
10. EMBELLISHMENT: The engraving and decorating of a memorial marker, such as: (1) the monument on an in-ground burial; (2) the headstone on a ground vault; or (3) the face plate of a mausoleum crypt or niche.³

¹ Deeds of crypt ownership for St. Joseph Mausoleum use the name "Garden Crypt Mausoleum."

² When multiple mausoleum crypts are contiguous to each other and owned by a single owner.

³ Please refer to **VIII. Embellishments, Flowers, and Plants**, page 6ff, for what is allowed and/or what is prohibited as embellishments in our Cemeteries and Mausoleums.

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IV. USE OF CEMETERIES

1. No unauthorized person(s) are permitted within the cemetery between the times of sunset and sunrise.¹
2. Children less than 15 years of age must be accompanied by an adult at all times while within the cemetery.
3. A. Persons, while within the cemetery, shall use only the roadways and sidewalks as provided, all of which shall remain private roadways and sidewalks.
B. Every visitor must respect all memorials, marked or unmarked, and refrain from walking across or standing on any memorial.
4. A. Automobiles and other vehicles shall be driven solely on the roadways and at no greater speed than fifteen (15) miles per hour.
B. Anyone who drives an automobile or other vehicle upon a lawn area, or any area within the cemetery other than the roadways, shall be liable to the cemetery for any damage resulting there from.
5. Where designated parking is not marked, visitors are expected to use Christian respect for the cemetery property and toward all other visitors, avoiding every possibility of harm to person or property.
6. No motorcycles, ATVs or other recreational vehicles shall be admitted into or operated within the cemetery without prior permission, and will be permitted for business purposes only.²
7. The Cemetery Authority possesses the right to exercise and grant to others the right of ingress and egress over a memorial in connection with the repair, maintenance, improvement, or operation of the cemetery.
A. Concrete trucks bringing cement for repairs or improvements shall be limited to maximum of 2 yards at a time.³
B. The vehicle weight limit at all other times is 15 tons.
8. Should anyone wish to file a complaint, in connection with any matter pertaining to the Cemetery or its operation, the individual must submit the complaint in writing to the Pastoral Council of the appropriate parish.

¹ This policy is for the safety of persons not being able to see well at night, and for the protection of property which could be damaged even if by accident.

² This is to curtail excessive noise as well as to protect memorials and property from vehicles traveling in unauthorized locations.

³ Weight in excess of this can damage the Cemetery roadways.

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IV. Use of Cemeteries continued:

9. The pastor, and any person(s) he may designate, shall have the authority as a “peace officer” and shall have charge of the operation of the cemetery and, at all times, shall have the right of supervision of and control over, any and all persons within the cemetery, including, without limitation, the conduct of funerals, traffic, owners, visitors, and all others.
10. All prevailing provisions and penalties of the law will be enforced for violators.

V. USE OF RIGHTS OF INTERMENT AND MEMORIAL

1. A. The right to use any memorial shall be limited to the interment of the remains of the human dead, regardless of the nature, right or extent of ownership of the memorial.
B. Proof of ownership will be required by the Cemetery Authority prior to granting the immediate right to interment.
2. A. The rights of interment or memorial may be donated by any owner to another party only with the written consent of the Cemetery Authority.
B. A copy of the documents conceding the right of interment to another party must be delivered to the offices of the Cemetery by the owner, who retains all rights and obligations of ownership, prior to the use of the space by the indicated donee.
3. A. Within the Cemetery proper there is to be only one (1) interment per space or plot.¹
B. Regardless of actions of the past, the following regulations are in force:
 - i. No stacking of cement vaults is permitted; only one (1) concrete vault may be placed in a plot.
 - ii. Only one (1) coffin/casket **or** one (1) cremains container can be interred in any one (1) ground vault.
 - iii. Once cemented shut, ground vaults can only be opened for extraordinary circumstances and only after written approval by the Cemetery Authority.
4. The erection of new private and/or family tombs must receive pre-construction approval by the Cemetery Authority.²
5. The owner(s) of private / family tombs in the cemetery, (**not** ground vaults or mausoleum crypts), have the right to determine the number of burials in their tombs, following the laws of the State of Louisiana.

¹ An exception to this policy applies to existing private or family tombs constructed for the purpose of multiple burials.

² Multiple factors might allow or prohibit such new tombs, therefore any singular approval does not establish a precedent for future approvals.

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V. Rights of Interment continued:

6. The interment of human remains, by coffin or by cremains container, within Mausoleums owned by the Cemetery follow these guidelines:
 - A. Coffins and cremains containers must fit within the Mausoleum space provided:
 - i. Crypt openings measure: 32 X 26 inches (width x height)
 - ii. Cremains Niches measure: 10.5 x 10.5 x 9 inches (width x height x depth)
 - B. Each crypt is designed to hold one (1) coffin/casket.
 - C. The maximum number of burials in any single crypt is two (2), when at least one burial is a cremains container.¹ When a second interment occurs, an additional fee will be charged to supplement the perpetual care of the mausoleum, (please refer to **Annex I: Schedule of Fees.**)
 - D. Previously interred coffins CANNOT be removed, opened, or the remains removed in order to allow multiple coffin burials in the same crypt.
 - E. Each Mausoleum Niche can be used for one (1) interment and only one (1), and NO exception to this policy will be made.
 - F. Previously interred cremains containers cannot be removed nor opened with the intention to combine the ashes, to allow for multiple burials in the same niche.
7.
 - A. When the Cemetery makes preparation for an interment on the authority of any person presenting a title of ownership, the Cemetery's right to make such interment can be suspended if the Cemetery receives a written protest from any legally entitled person and if the objection is considered reasonable by the Cemetery Authority.
 - B. Only after the Cemetery Authority determines the right to proceed will the interment take place.
8. Permission of the Cemetery Authority must be requested and granted before moving, removing or transferring any remains within the Cemetery, even in regard to private or family tombs.
9. Civil permits are required and must be presented to the Cemetery before human remains or cremains can be transported off the Cemetery grounds.

VI. PERPETUAL CARE

1. It is the Cemetery's intention to furnish general care and maintenance as may become reasonably necessary due to natural growth and ordinary wear and tear, provided at reasonable limits and within the net income derived from the Perpetual Care Fund.

¹ This is true whether for: one (1) coffin/casket and one (1) cremains container; or two (2) cremains containers. Additionally, "True Companion" crypts can have up to four (4) burials, two (2) of which must be cremains interments; "Companion with Abbey" can have up to eight (8) burials, four (4) of which must be cremains interments.

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VI. Perpetual Care continued:

2. However, when in the opinion of the Cemetery Authority, it becomes necessary to repair or reconstruct any memorial on account of damage for which the Cemetery is not liable, the Cemetery Authority may at its discretion give written notice to the owner of record, and require that repairs or reconstruction be made within a reasonable period of time.

VII. CORRECTION OF ERRORS

1. The Cemetery reserves the right to correct any and all errors which might occur in connection with the: (1) operation of the Cemetery; (2) making of an interment, disinterment or removal; (3) description, transfer, granting the right of use or conveyance of a memorial; or (4) removing and transferring the remains that are removed.

VIII. EMBELLISHMENTS, FLOWERS, AND PLANTS

The Embellishment of any memorial, whether Cemetery vault headstone or Mausoleum crypt face plate, is allowed by the owner of the memorial according to the follows norms:

1. A. Standard embellishment means:
 - i. The engraving of the deceased person's name along with dates of birth and death; or
 - ii. The affixing of a metal plate with similar inscription.Also allowed as standard embellishment are:
 - iii. A single vase for flowers, (refer to **VIII, 5, p. 8**); and/or
 - iv. A votive candle holder, (refer to **VIII, 6, p. 8**).
- B. These embellishments must be performed by a professional contractor approved in advance by the Cemetery Authority.¹
2. Additional non-standard embellishments may be allowed on a case-by-case basis when the owner submits a request and receives prior approval by the Cemetery Authority. This might include decorative engravings and/or a single permanently and professionally attached photo of the deceased person(s) buried in the vault or crypt.²

¹ Refer to **Annex II: Approved Vendors**, for a list of approved vendors for this work.

² Prior approvals of non-standard embellishments do not establish a precedent for similar or future approvals. Please seek approval prior to attempting any non-standard embellishment.

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VIII. Embellishments, continued:

3. **PROHIBITED** embellishments, whether installed personally or professionally, include, but are not limited to¹:
1. Any loose items placed upon or in proximity to the memorial.²
 2. Decorations not in keeping with, or offensive to, the Christian nature of the Cemetery and Mausoleums.³
 3. Items personally affixed with tape, glue, wire, string, or other such materials.⁴
 4. The personal painting of words and/or images on memorials.⁵
 5. Items which encroach on neighboring memorials.⁶
4. **EXCEPTION** to paragraph VIII. 3.: for the *first 30 days* following the death of a loved one, the Cemetery will allow *temporary* extra adornments as a token of immediate grief. Following the allowance for this period of grief, the removal of extraneous embellishments will be enforced.

¹ Please let common courtesy toward others direct your decisions about how you attempt to commemorate your deceased loved ones!

² "Items" include but are not limited to, statues, stuffed animals, loose pots, personal mementos, or non-approved chairs. As they deteriorate they become unsightly and create debris.

These items can become broken, lost, or stolen; the Cemetery cannot accept responsibility for loose items. As well, these items can obstruct normal operation and maintenance within the Cemetery and Mausoleums.

³ The Cemetery Authority will be the only legitimate judge of what is fitting or not fitting within the boundaries of the Cemetery and its Mausoleums.

⁴ "Items" include but are not limited to, cards, photos, mementos, plaques, or plaster inscriptions. As with loose items, they deteriorate and become unsightly and create debris.

Glue or tape adhesive soak into the stone causing *irreversible* discoloration and eventual deterioration. Wire can rust and cause similar discoloration; it also becomes a safety hazard when it breaks.

Complaints about the damage these items cause far outweigh the desire of individuals to decorate the memorials of loved ones.

⁵ Non-professional embellishment of memorials often causes harm to neighboring memorials, so only approved and professional installed embellishments are allowed.

⁶ Any encroachment on a neighboring memorial is unjust and could lead to legal actions by the owners of those neighboring memorials, thus this policy seeks to prevent this occurrence.

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VIII. Embellishments, continued:

5. Flower Vases:

- A. A single standard flower vase bracket may be installed on each crypt face within the Mausoleum.
- B. i. Similarly, a standard flower vase may be attached to any Cemetery ground vault. ii. Loose standing vases must be weighted to avoid falling over or being blown away.
- C. Freshly cut flowers or artificial flowers may be placed in these vases.¹
- D. The Cemetery has the right to remove and discard flowers and plants when they die or freeze, or in the case of plastic or silk flowers, become faded and unsightly.

6. Votive Candles:

- A. A single "Eternal Light" with a candle may be installed on each crypt face within the Mausoleum.²
- B. Similarly, a votive candle holder may be installed on Cemetery ground vaults.³

7. No permanent placement of plants, trees, or shrubs, whether planted in the ground or merely potted, are allowed on the Cemetery grounds or within the Mausoleum.

8. The Cemetery Authority may allow the placement of chairs and benches where judged appropriate; permission must be sought and granted before these are brought to the Cemetery.

- A. These chairs and benches immediately become the property of the Cemetery and might be moved or removed according to the needs of the Cemetery and Mausoleums.⁴

9. **ANYTHING** brought onsite violating this **Rules, Regulations, and Policies, Section VIII**, will be considered forfeited by the person(s) who placed it on the Cemetery / Mausoleum property. Such items will be discarded when removed.

- A. If items continue to collect on or around certain plots, vaults, or crypts, the owner of the deed will be contacted to take corrective action. Continual violations may be considered vandalism and will be dealt with accordingly.

10. Neither does the Cemetery insure against, nor does it accept responsibility for, the loss, theft, or damage to personal items brought onto the property and left in the Cemetery, including approved flowers or candles.

¹ These flowers should not obstruct or deface neighboring memorials.

² Only plastic cylinder candles are allowed to be burned in these Eternal Light holders.

³ To prevent the hazard of wild fires, these candle holders must be secured and not placed loose on top of vaults.

⁴ Generally, only one bench per Mausoleum alley or area, in good condition, both structurally and aesthetically, will be allowed.

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IX. MAINTENANCE, CONSTRUCTION, REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS

1. THE ESTABLISHED GRADE OF ANY LOT SHALL NOT BE ALTERED IN ANY WAY.
2. No signs or advertisements of any kind are permitted within the Cemetery.
3. No enclosure of any kind, such as a cover, fence, hedge, or ditch, shall be permitted around or abutting in whole or part, a memorial on any side.
4. The Cemetery maintenance crew will be performing necessary and routine cleaning and maintenance of the cemetery and mausoleum structures on an ongoing basis.
5. The Mausoleum doors shall be closed when possible.¹
6. Should Mausoleum crypt faces become damaged due to age-caused deterioration and/or maintenance accident, the Cemetery will at its own expense replace the crypt face along with existing **standard** embellishments, specifically: names, dates, flower vase and/or candle brackets.²
 - A. However, the costs of non-standard embellishments, e.g., additional engravings, porcelain photos, or artwork, added to the crypt face by the owner beyond the standard embellishments, (even when approved by the Cemetery Authority), remain the financial responsibility of the owner should the owner choose to re-decorate the new crypt face.³
 - B. Beyond **IX. 6.** and **IX. 6. A.**, should the damage to the Mausoleum crypt face be determined to have been caused by any additional engraving or embellishment, whether approved or not, the full cost of the replacement crypt face, including all embellishments, will be solely the responsibility of the owner.
 - C. Should non-authorized embellishments, that is, **prohibited** embellishments,⁴ cause damage to any neighboring crypt faces, the owner of the offending crypt will be liable to the owner of the damaged crypt for all repairs.
7. **Cemetery Fund:** Each November, in connection with the All Souls' Day Commemoration, parishioners and friends of our parish cemeteries are asked to contribute voluntarily to the "Cemetery Fund;" an envelope is contained in that month's contribution packet. These funds are used to make improvements to the cemetery over and above routine maintenance.

¹ This will help prevent insects and dust from entering the Mausoleum.

² This is part of the perpetual care obligation of the Cemetery to Mausoleum crypt owners.

³ These additional embellishments are not covered by standard perpetual care fees nor by cemetery/mausoleum insurance. **Owners are welcome to obtain additional insurance, such as a Homeowner's Rider on their own.**

⁴ Refer to **VIII. Embellishments, 3. Prohibited . . .**, p. 7, for details.

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IX. IMPROVEMENTS, continued:

7. A. Contributions to this Cemetery Fund can be made at any time during the year. There is no assessment made on parishioners or cemetery visitors for maintenance work or improvements.

X. OPENING CRYPTS AND PLOTS

1. The opening of mausoleum crypts and subsequent interment at St. Joseph is handled by the local cemetery maintenance workers. This service at St. Michael and St. Mary is handled by a third party business. See **Annex I: Schedule of Fees** for the cost of this service.
 - A. The engraving of Mausoleum crypt plates is always handled by a third party business; charges are not controlled by the Cemetery.¹ See **Annex II: Approved Vendors**.
2. The digging of plots and the opening of vaults at each cemetery is handled through a third party business, normally contacted by the Funeral Home Service at the time of burial.²
 - A. While the burial of caskets and/or cremains in in-ground vaults must be handled by a third party business, the State of Louisiana charges each Cemetery directly for each interment, therefore the Cemetery must still charge a burial fee. See **Annex I: Schedule of Fees** for this "Burial Registration Fee,"
 - B. Headstones, markers, and the engraving of such, is handled by a third party business; charges are not controlled by the Cemetery.³ See **Annex II: Approved Vendors**.
3. The in-ground burial of cremains is allowed without a concrete vault under the following conditions:
 - i. the container must remain sealed;
 - ii. the top of the container must be buried at least 6 inches below ground level; and
 - iii. it must be protected from future disturbance by a concrete or solid marker being placed above the burial site.
 - B. This digging can be done by Cemetery maintenance. See **Annex I: Schedule of Fees** for the costs of this service.
 - C. Only one (1) cremains container per ground vault can be interred in this fashion.⁴

¹ Refer to **VIII. Embellishments, 1. B.** p. 6.

² The costs for this work is determined on a case-by-case basis, and is handled through the family's chosen Funeral Home Service.

³ Refer to **VIII. Embellishments, 1. B.** p. 6.

⁴ Refer to **V. Rights of Interment, 3**, p. 4.

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XI. PURCHASE OF PLOTS, VAULTS, AND MAUSOLEUM SPACES

1. Should anyone wish to purchase a plot,¹ vault, crypt, or niche, that person shall place an order with the appropriate personnel. Contacting the Pastoral Center in Paulina is always advisable: (225) 869-5751.

Please Note: See **Annex I: Schedule of Fees** for estimated prices for burial spaces.

2. St. Joseph Cemetery:
 - A. Cemetery plots (measuring 4' x 10'), which includes the plot, vault, and concrete coping, are assigned by and can be purchased through:
the Pastoral Center at St. Joseph: (225) 869-5751.
 - B. Mausoleum crypts and niches are assigned by and can be purchased through:
Tania Bourgeois: (225) 206-7880.
 - I. Prices vary by location and design; Mrs. Bourgeois will answer any questions directly with the purchaser.
3. St. Michael Cemetery:
 - A. Cemetery plots (measuring 4' x 10'), which includes the plot, vault, and concrete coping, are assigned by and can be purchased through:
the Pastoral Center at St. Joseph: (225) 869-5751.
 - B. Mausoleum crypts and niches are assigned by and can be purchased through:
Tania Bourgeois: (225) 206-7880.
 - I. Prices vary by location and design; Mrs. Bourgeois will answer any questions directly with the purchaser.
4. St. Mary Cemetery:
 - A. Cemetery plots (measuring 4' x 10'), which includes the plot, vault, and concrete coping, are assigned by and can be purchased through:
the Pastoral Center at St. Joseph: (225) 869-5751.
 - B. There are no Mausoleum crypts or niches currently available at St. Mary.

XII. TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP

1. The sale or transfer of any right of interment or memorial shall not be binding upon the Cemetery until and unless the same sale or transfer shall have been approved in writing, and duly recorded in the official records of the Cemetery.
2. No subdivision of ownership of the right of interment or memorial shall be permitted without the written consent of the Cemetery Authority.
3. The Cemetery is willing to buy back any never used crypt or vault from any owner for the original purchase price. (Interest paid for timed purchases are excluded.)

¹ Cemeteries no longer sell plots without a vault already installed.

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XII. TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP continued:

4. Transfer of Ownership can take place within and between the three (3) cemeteries of the East St. James cluster. If this is done through the Cemetery Authority itself, the original purchase price will be used to offset any additional purchase price and fees associated with the new deed of ownership.

XIII. CONSTRUCTION OF NEW MAUSOLEUMS

1. When spaces become limited in the existing Cemetery mausoleums, a new Mausoleum can be constructed. The Cemetery Authority contracts with an outside company to sell mausoleum spaces to cover that company's costs for the construction of the new mausoleum. The sale price of crypts and niches in the new mausoleum are under the control of this outside company and affected by the current market for mausoleum burials.
 - A. The Cemetery Authority has no control over the sale price or the decision of the outside company as to the feasibility to construct a new mausoleum.
 - B. The Cemetery receives a portion of the sale price of mausoleum spaces to provide ongoing maintenance and perpetual care for mausoleum.

XIV. REPEAL, AMENDMENT, AND ADDITION TO THESE POLICIES

- 1 The parishes may at any time and from time to time, with or without written notice to the owners, repeal, amend, modify, add to, or change any of these Rules, Regulations, and Policies, in whole or in part, for the best operation of the cemeteries and mausoleums.

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