

St. John the Baptist
Catholic Cemetery

Rules and Regulations

The Table of Contents

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Our Mission Statement..... | |
| Definitions of Commonly used terms | Section I |
| Management Rights..... | Section II |
| Burials | Section III |
| Cremation | Section IV |
| Entombments..... | Section V |
| Removals/Disinterments | Section VI |
| Infant Burials | Section VII |
| Non-Catholic Burials..... | Section VIII |
| What is a Burial Right? | Section IX |
| Grave Decorating | Section X |
| Memorialization | Section XI |
| Memorial Flags..... | Section XII |
| What is Endowed Care? | Section XIII |
| Tree and Shrub Planting..... | Section XIV |
| Other Issues & Concerns..... | Section XV |

Our Mission Statement

The Church is commissioned by Christ to proclaim the Good news. Catholic cemeteries reflect this mission by maintaining and expressing Catholic teaching and tradition in their endeavor to serve the many needs of those requesting Catholic burial. St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery, owned and operated by St. John the Baptist Parish Ypsilanti, provides for the family and friends who seek the healing and consoling presence of Christ and His Church in a Catholic setting.

St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery serves the needs of individuals and families by offering healing, hope, and peace in a ministry of liturgy, prayer, counseling and consolation. With the grace of God, we endeavor to help people to experience Christian death and burial with faith, hope, dignity, and peace even as they and we suffer the pain and confusion of loss, separation, and grief.

All information in this booklet has been adapted from The Diocese of Lansing Catholic Cemeteries Rules and Regulations Book.

SECTION I. DEFINITIONS OF COMMONLY USED TERMS

- \$ **St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery:** A cemetery within the Diocese of Lansing, owned and managed by St. John the Baptist Parish Ypsilanti.
- \$ **Grave/Grave Space:** A space of sufficient size to accommodate one human interment.
- \$ **Lot:** Numbered divisions as shown on the cemetery map which consists of one or more adjoining graves.
- \$ **Plot/Lot Holder:** The person or persons who hold the original “Right of Burial” to a given cemetery lot as recorded in the cemetery’s records.
- \$ **Management:** The person or persons duly appointed by the Pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish Ypsilanti for the purpose of conducting and administering the cemetery owned and operated by St. John the Baptist Parish Ypsilanti. The “**Cemetery Manager**” will mean the person appointed by the Pastor for the purpose of managing St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery.
- \$ **Markers:** A memorial placed flush to the ground on a grave identifying a particular grave site.
- \$ **Memorial:** This term includes a monument, marker, tablet, headstone.
- \$ **Monument:** A tombstone or memorial of granite or marble which will extend above the surface of the ground.

SECTION II. MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

Good Stewardship of cemetery land and the work of burying the dead, maintaining the graves and today’s legal, statutory, and regulatory environment demands that St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery develop policies and procedures to guide employees in their day-to-day activities. Thus, we reserve certain rights and privileges exclusively to St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery, which are listed below.

- \$ **The Right to re plat**
- \$ **The Right to Reclassify and Restrict**
- \$ **The Right to Ingress and Egress**
- \$ **The Right of Easement**
- \$ **The Right to Substitute (with just cause)**
- \$ **The Right of Exceptions to the Rules**
- \$ **The Right of Rule Making**
- \$ **The Right to Amend Rules**

SECTION III. BURIALS

“In committing the body to its resting place, the community expresses the hope that, with all those who have gone before marked with the sign of faith, the deceased awaits the glory of the resurrection. The rite of committal is an expression of the communion that exists between the Church on earth and the Church in heaven: the deceased passes with the farewell prayers of the community of believers into the welcoming company of those who need faith no longer but see God face to face.” (Rite of Christian Burials #206)

General Requirements:

- \$ **Arrangements for Interments.** We request that the Cemetery Office is notified in advance for all interments to give the cemetery ample time to prepare the burial space.
- \$ **Supervision of Funerals.** All funerals will be subject to and comply with the direction of cemetery personnel while they are within the cemetery.
- \$ **Permit Required.** A Michigan Department of Community Health Burial Transit Permit is required for all burials within the cemetery.
- \$ **Viewing Prohibited.** The casket may not be opened at any time within the cemetery without the express permission (and in presence) of the Cemetery Manager or his designee.
- \$ **Right of Scheduling.** We reserve the right to designate the hour and manner in which interments, dis-interments and removals will or will not be permitted.
- \$ **Delayed Burials.** The cemetery will in no way be liable for any delay in the interment of a body where a protest has been made, where the rules and regulations have not been complied with, when weather conditions hinder the burial or where such burial is prohibited.
- \$ **Outer Burial Container Required.** It is required that all in-ground burials have a container constructed of permanent material.
- \$ **Vault Liability.** Cemetery Personnel will not be held liable for any damages or injuries resulting from burial containers thereof when they set or seal said containers or maintain the same.
- \$ **Correction of Errors.** We reserve the right to correct any errors within the cemetery.
- \$ **Burial Fee.** All interments are subject to a fee as set forth in the price guidelines as fixed by us.
- \$ **Funeral Flowers.** Funeral Flowers will be left at the final burial spot for up to three days after the final committal.

SECTION IV. CREMATION

“The cremated remains of a body should be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they came. This includes the use of a worthy vessel to contain the ashes, the manner in which they are carried, the care and attention to the appropriate placement and transport, and the final disposition.” (Order of Christian Funerals #417)

- \$ ***Cremated Remains Permitted.*** Interment of cremated remains is permitted in accordance with the provisions of Canon Law and Diocesan Statutes.
- \$ ***Above Ground and In Ground Burial Available.*** To accommodate the needs of families, both above and below ground burials are possible for the final disposition of cremated remains.
- \$ ***Scattering.*** Scattering of cremated remains is prohibited at St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery.
- \$ ***Double Interments Permitted.*** We reserve the right to permit the interment of more than one human remains in a space with the purchase of a second or third burial right fee.

SECTION V. ENTOMBMENTS

- \$ ***Casket Required.*** Entombments must be made in an approved casket which complies with the regulations of the controlling Department of Health. All caskets must be placed in a vault.
- \$ ***General Requirements.*** All rules listed under the general requirements in the Diocese of Lansing Catholic Cemeteries Rules and Regulation Book must be adhered to.

SECTION VI. REMOVALS/DISINTERMENTS

During the committal rite at the cemetery, the deceased is placed in the custody of the Church for the spiritual protection of the body while awaiting the Last Day. Once interred, the remains of all the faithful are in their final resting place. Disinterments, exhumations, and/or removals should never be made without just cause.

- \$ ***Disinterment Permitted.*** **NO** disinterment or removal will be allowed except with the written authorization of the Cemetery Manager and with the authorization of the plot or lot holder(s).
- \$ ***Arrangements for Disinterments.*** All arrangements for disinterments should be directed to a funeral home first.
- \$ ***Cost.*** The family petitioning the removal will bear all costs involved with the disinterment as set forth by the price guidelines for St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery and any funeral home expenses.
- \$ ***Scheduling for Disinterments.*** Scheduling for all disinterments is solely at the discretion of the Cemetery Manager.
- \$ ***No Liability for Damage.*** We will exercise due care in making a disinterment and removal, but we will not assume liability for the damage to any casket, burial container or memorial incurred when making the disinterment and removal.
- \$ ***Removal for Profit.*** The removal of the bodies of a deceased lot owner and his immediate family for profit to their heirs is repugnant to the ordinary sense of decency and is absolutely forbidden.

SECTION VII: INFANTS, STILLBORNS, AND FETUSES

St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery has an Infant Burial Area known as Babyland. This area is designated as a permanent grave site for the final resting place of an infant, stillborn or fetus. All life is sacred and the remains of fetuses and stillborns of Catholic parents should be given a reverent Christian burial.

- § **Infant Burial Spaces.** The cemetery has a specially designated infant burial section within the cemetery. This section has been set aside for the sole purpose of burial of infants, stillborns and fetuses. Burial in this section will follow a “next available space” procedure.
- § **Burial in Family Lot.** Burial of an infant is allowed in a family lot. This may be in the same grave reserved for a family member. The cemetery will check the lot to insure there is space in the grave in question. Second burial right purchase is not required.
- § **Transfers or Dis-interments.** Transfers and dis-interments will be handled in the same fashion as an adult. A Funeral Home must be contacted prior to any arrangements at the cemetery.

SECTION VIII: NON-CATHOLIC BURIALS

St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery exists for the burial of the faithful. On occasion, non-Catholic relatives of Catholic families have asked to be buried in our cemetery. These cases will be discussed on a person-by-person basis.

- § **Interment.** Interment of non-Catholics will be permitted in St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery under the conditions required by the regulations of St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery.
- § **Final Committal.** On those occasions when a non-Catholic is invited to be buried in our cemetery, the deceased person’s minister may conduct the burial service according to his own ritual.
- § **Memorialization.** Members of non-Catholic and non-Christian faiths welcomed for burial in a Catholic cemetery may be allowed appropriate symbols of their faith.
- § **Solicitation of non-Catholics.** It is the policy of St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery not to solicit to the general public nor imply explicitly or implicitly on our advertisement that the cemetery owned and operated by St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery exists for other than the Catholic faithful.

SECTION IX: WHAT IS A BURIAL RIGHT?

The purchase of Burial Rights in a Catholic cemetery is not ownership in the sense of real estate, but an easement or license for the use of graves for the interment of human remains. Cemetery sections, contiguous sites, grave sites, walkways, and roads are established by plan. This plan provides for proper access for the public and for efficient cemetery operations. All sites are identified and marked before burial rights privileges are granted. The purchases of these rights also include funding for the future care of all graves.

- \$ ***Access to Plots.*** Plot or lot holders, their heirs and descendants have a right to access the graves during hours which the cemetery is open to the public by the shortest route from the roadway or walkway to the grave.
- \$ ***Usage of Plots Restricted.*** No lot, grave, or any other spaces within St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery will be used for any other purpose than for the burial of human remains.
- \$ ***Right to Memorialize.*** The right of burial in a cemetery lot carries the right to provide an approved memorial to identify the buried.
- \$ ***Sale on a per-person basis.*** The sale of a burial right is on a per-person basis. There are times when a second burial right may be purchased for the burial of cremated remains or infant burial.

SECTION X: GRAVE DECORATING

The burial of your loved ones with dignity, and the ongoing care of their graves are the main mission of St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery. It is quite natural to want to leave tangible evidence of devotion to the lot of a loved one. However, there are incidents when decorations become damaged or missing during our mission. These incidents are not deliberate nor show a lack of compassion for the deceased. We regret that we cannot guarantee to safeguard the grave decorations from damage or disappearance, and we also regret that we cannot accept the responsibility for their damage or loss.

Permitted

The following are permitted during our spring and summer growing season. (April 1-October 31)

- \$ ***Potted Plants.*** Potted plants are permitted if placed *ON* the marker or *ON* a side of the monument. Only one potted plant per lot in lieu of an approved flower bed. Unsightly, unapproved, or potted plants which interfere with the orderly mowing of the cemetery will be removed.
- \$ ***Flower Beds.*** Approved flower beds may be planted on the grave side of the marker.
- \$ ***Remembrance lights.*** Remembrance lights may be placed at the grave. Check with the cemetery for actual dates these are allowed.
- \$ ***Wood or Cedar Chips.*** Wood and cedar chips, and similar biodegradable materials, may be used to decorate the flower bed.

The following are permitted during our winter season (December 1-March 31)

- \$ Artificial flowers and Grave Blankets are permitted. Please note that for Grave Blankets, a “Placement and Removal Tag” is required. This tag can be purchased at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church office (411 Florence Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48197) during the weekdays from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm (closed from noon to 1:00 pm). The cost for this tag is a non-refundable \$15 fee. Once purchased, this tag should be placed in a visible spot on the grave blanket. Please note, a grave blanket onsite without a tag will be removed. After March 31st, blankets and artificial flowers will be discarded as weather and soil conditions permit. St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery is not responsible for damages when such decorations interfere with opening and closing of graves.

Grave decorations are important to us. We recognize that for many, decorating a grave shows respect, sorrow over the lost, and allows a moment for cherished thoughts. Some decorations, however, when placed in contact with cemetery equipment, pose a danger not only to cemetery workers, but to the visitors and memorials around them. Other decorations hinder our ability to effectively keep the cemetery clean, mowed and trimmed. We thank you in advance for not placing the following items in our cemetery.

Not Permitted:

The following are not permitted during our spring and summer growing season. (April 1-October 31)

- \$ ***Shepherd Hooks.*** The placing of shepherd hooks is not permitted
- \$ ***Artificial Flowers.*** Placing artificial flowers in the ground is discouraged. Wires used to create these flowers can cause serious damage or injury if projected by the lawnmower.
- \$ ***Perennial Planting.*** Perennial planting is discouraged. The activities in the cemetery simply cannot protect permanent decorations from damage.
- \$ ***Stones or Rocks.*** These items can cause serious injury to visitors and memorials when projected by a lawnmower.
- \$ ***Decorative Borders.*** Decorative boarders, the use of fencing, etc. hinder the ability for the cemetery to be mowed and trimmed effectively.
- \$ ***Glass, China or Porcelain.*** Glass, China or Porcelain of any kind, which when broken present a serious safety hazard.
- \$ ***Lawn Decorations and Statues.*** Experience has shown that placing such objects on a grave encourages theft and vandals in the cemetery.
- \$ ***Ramblers, Vine Plants or Ground Cover and Plants with thorns.***
- \$ ***Knickknack, Etc.*** Knickknacks, toys, shells, metal designs, ornaments, clothing jewelry or any other object of monetary or sentimental value should never be placed on the lot, near a memorial or in the cemetery. We will not be responsible for the loss, damage or theft of such objects.

SECTION XI: MEMORIALIZATION

In a Catholic cemetery, memorials have the purpose of acknowledging and honoring the dead and inspiring the living with the appropriate inscriptions which bespeak the faith and dedication of God and of those who pray for the living. For this reason, our cemetery encourages memorialization, as long as it fits in conformity with cemetery standards and to the Catholic Church Teachings and Beliefs.

- \$ ***Good Taste Rule.*** St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery has the right to determine the appropriateness of any memorial placed in its cemetery. Items which are found offensive, improper or inappropriate for such a setting will be removed without prior notice by the cemetery staff. All monuments and markers are subject to the rules and regulations of the cemetery, and to the Catholic Church Teachings and Beliefs and must be approved by Cemetery Management.

- \$ ***Symbols on Memorials.*** It is strongly advisable that memorials have a permanent Catholic emblem on it. We will not allow any emblem, inscription, or insignia which is inconsistent with the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.
- \$ ***Memorials Purchased Elsewhere.*** All memorials, regardless of where they are purchased, will need to meet the criteria listed under the Good Taste Rule & Symbols on Memorials.
- \$ ***Veteran Markers.*** The placement of a Veteran Marker along with a separate memorial is permissible per the rules set forth by the United States Veterans Administrations.
- \$ ***Size.*** All memorials must conform with the Uniform Size Requirements set forth by St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery.
- \$ ***Installation.*** Marker installation must be in accordance with individual cemetery procedures. Please check with the cemetery for the rules and regulations regarding installation.
- \$ ***Raised Lettering.*** While we will exercise all possible care to protect raised lettering, carving, or ornaments on any memorial, it disclaims responsibility for damage or injury thereto.
- \$ ***Insurance Recommended.*** We advise the purchasing of insurance for the memorials by the lot lessors, or owners of the memorial.
- \$ ***Temporary Markers.*** Temporary grave markers will be removed by the cemetery staff.
- \$ ***Ownership of Memorials.*** All memorials are the private property of the purchaser. Repairs and upkeep of all memorials placed on cemetery lots are the responsibility of the plot or lot holder.
- \$ ***Unightly or Dilapidated Memorials.*** Should something become unsightly, dilapidated, or a menace to the safety of persons within the cemetery, we will have the right to correct the condition or to remove the same, at the expense of the plot or lot holder.

SECTION XII: MEMORIAL FLAGS

Flags are appropriate reminders of the service a deceased person has given to his/her country, community and to a particular Community-based Organization. In order to ensure the continued beautification of the cemetery, to allow for the unobstructed proper care and maintenance of the cemetery, and to ensure that all veterans and members of posts, lodges and other Community-based Organizations are honored in a fair and consistent manner, it is necessary for St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery to develop policies and procedures to assure that this will be done without offending anyone.

- \$ ***When are flags allowed?*** Flags and flag holders are permitted at the graves one week prior to Memorial Day through Flag Day. Flags are also permitted on the Sunday before the Fourth of July and Veteran's Day through the following Sunday.
- \$ ***Where can a flag be placed?*** All flags and flag holders must be placed on the head of the grave abutting the monument or marker.

- \$ ***How many flags can be placed?*** Not more than one flag can be placed in one cemetery lot regardless of the number of deceased veterans, lodge members, etc., interred in the lot.
- \$ ***What happens if the flag is not there when I return?*** We cannot assume the responsibility for the safekeeping of any flag, flag holder or other emblem, even when set out within the approved times.
- \$ ***What happens to a flag placed for a burial?*** The flag will remain until the funeral flowers have been removed by the cemetery staff.

SECTION XIII: WHAT IS ENDOWED CARE?

The cemetery is operated by St. John the Baptist Catholic Church and is an "Endowed Care" cemetery. A Catholic cemetery is a sacred place, whether it is newly blessed or hundreds of years old. It is not enough that the cemetery is well kept, but it must be well kept forever. To provide for the future care when all other sources of income have ceased, the Diocese of Lansing requires a percentage of the sale of burial rights be set aside and invested for this purpose.

- \$ ***Endowed Care Permitted Uses.*** Interest from the endowed care fund will be used for cutting and trimming the grass at reasonable intervals, maintenance of the grave and the general preservation of the lot and grounds, walk, roadways, boundaries, and buildings. It will also be used for the partial payment of tools and equipment, employee salaries and benefits, facilities, supplies, insurance, replacement parts, utilities, and any other costs associated with the current and future maintenance of the cemetery.
- \$ ***Endowed Care Restrictions.*** The term "Endowed Care" will not mean the maintenance, repair or replacement of any memorial, nor the planting of flowers or ornamental plants, nor the doing of any special or unusual work, nor does it mean the reconstruction of any granite, bronze or concrete work on any section of the lot, or any portion or portions thereof in the cemetery, injured or damaged by any cause direct or indirect, beyond our reasonable control.

SECTION XIV: TREE AND SHRUB PLANTING

St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery undertakes to maintain, so far as its income will permit, the planting of trees and shrubs on its property which serve as a needful background for lots or as an essential part of the general landscape. St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery does not undertake to maintain trees, shrubs, or other plants planted primarily for the benefit or decoration of individual lots.

- \$ ***Planting of Trees.*** The planting of a tree or shrub on an individual grave is prohibited. Trees, shrubs, and other such items are not permitted without the written consent of the Cemetery Manager.
- \$ ***Ownership of Trees.*** All trees planted within the cemetery boundaries become the property of St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery. However, we will not be responsible for the replacement of a tree, shrub or other such items if it is deemed necessary that it be removed.
- \$ ***Removal of Trees.*** All unauthorized planting of trees, shrubs, and other such items will be removed without notification to the lot holder.

SECTION XV: OTHER ISSUES AND CONCERNS

- \$ ***Cemetery Security.*** The cemetery will have the right to maintain guards, but is under no obligation to do so, when they deem it necessary.
- \$ ***Outside Workers.*** We must authorize outside workforces that perform work in the cemetery.
- \$ ***Succession.*** Rights to a lot must be specifically mentioned in a will. Otherwise, the laws of intrastate succession will apply to unused burial space.
- \$ ***Return and Exchange Privileges.*** The sale of burial rights from one party to another requires the written approval of the Cemetery Manager. The transaction requires the completion of a *Consent of Transfer* form, which can be obtained from the Cemetery Office and must be signed by burial right holder(s) and the Cemetery Manager. The conveyance or assignment of rights is subject to all rules, regulations, or conditions that may be imposed by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Lansing and/or St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery. See the cemetery office for further information.
- \$ ***Admission to Cemetery.*** We reserve the right to refuse admission to the cemetery and to refuse the use of cemetery equipment or Facility at any time to any person(s), as the rule of judgement, and tradition may dictate.
- \$ ***Loss or Damage.*** St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery disclaims all responsibility for any and all damage or losses from causes beyond our reasonable control, especially from damage caused by the elements, act of God, common enemy, thieves, vandals, strikers, malicious mischief makers, explosions, unavoidable accidents, invasions, insurrections, riots, or order of the military or civil authority, whether the damages are direct or indirect.
- \$ ***Vehicles.*** The operator and/or owner of any vehicle will be held responsible for any damage done by the vehicle whether it is intentional or unintentional.

This pamphlet is a Summary of the Rules and Regulations of St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery. As a Summary, IT DOES NOT contain all of the rules, conditions and limitations of the Cemetery. This publication will try to answer some of the most commonly asked questions about St. John the Baptist Catholic Cemetery and the rules and regulations governed by the staff. If there is anything that is not addressed in this booklet, please ask our staff. They will be glad to help in any way possible.