

St. Peter's Cemetery
Blessing, Texas
Preamble

Ever since the Sacred Body of the Crucified Savior was reverently laid in the tomb, there to await the hour of its glorious resurrection, the Church has been most solicitous to surround the burial of those who hope to rise with Christ with an atmosphere of deep Christian faith and a profound reverence. In the Requiem Mass and burial prayers, the Church gives voice to her Christian doctrines of the Resurrection of the Body, the Communion of Saints, and Everlasting Life. As a further seal and symbol of that faith, she sets apart and solemnly blesses the place in which the bodies of her faithful await the day of Resurrection.

In the very earlier days, Mother Church found it necessary to make rules and regulations which would protect the sacred places and relics laid therein. She could not, and would not, allow anything within the holy precincts which would desecrate them, lessen their beauty or bring dishonor on the dead.

To insure the Sacred Character
of
St. Peter's Catholic Cemetery
Blessing, Texas

in accord with the mind of the traditional practice of the Church, and to establish and maintain good order, the following rules and regulations are in effect.

Definitions

1. **Grave:** Shall mean a space of ground in the cemetery, used, or intended to be used for the burial of human remains.
2. **Lot:** Shall mean a space of ground containing a certain number of graves, plot side 10ft X 4ft (Minimum of 9ft X 4ft)
3. **Memorial:** Shall mean monuments, tombstones, headstones, or grave markers, for one or more deceased persons.
4. **Management:** Shall mean the Pastor of St. Peter's Catholic Church, and/or any person, or committee acting on his behalf and by his authority.
5. **Burial Rights:** Shall mean that the holder of a title or deed to a grave has the right to be buried in that grave, provided that he or she kept the rules and regulations of the cemetery and of the Church.
6. **Title to a Lot:** Note well that no one can purchase a portion of land in a Catholic Cemetery. One can only purchase the right to be buried in a particular lot. The title to the land remains always with the Church.
7. **Perpetual Care:** A RIGHT guaranteeing the upkeep of a grave, given to a grave owner who invests a designated amount of money with the cemetery association.
8. **Care:** The term used in reference to the upkeep of graves, and shall mean "to keep the sod in repair, to cut, clean, and care for graves as necessitated by natural growth, together with the maintenance of unsold portions of the cemetery, the roadways, and walkways, so that the general appearance of the entire cemetery is attractive. The term care shall in no case mean the maintenance, repair, or replacement of any grave stones, monuments, or memorials, placed or erected on any grave; nor the does it mean the reconstruction of any marker, granite, bronze, or concrete work, damaged by any cause, direct or indirect.
9. **Perpetual:** The term, used in reference to the upkeep of graves, shall mean that care of graves will last from the present moment until the end of time.
10. **Grave Owner:** Shall mean one who has burial rights to one or more graves in the cemetery.
11. **Urn:** A worthy vessel to contain the cremated remains in the manner of which they are carried, the care and attention to appropriate placement and transport, and the final disposition.
12. **Urn Vault:** The Urn contained within an "Urn Vault" can be placed in the grave, prior to an Adult burial. The "Urn Vault" may then be disinterred temporarily and then replaced on top of the adult burial. The "Urn Vault" must be clearly documented in the Cemetery Records. *Absence of the "Urn Vault" means the "Urn" MAY NOT be disturbed after burial.*

Rules and Regulations

13. Every Catholic, in good standing with the Church, has the right to Christian burial, and the right to be buried in consecrated ground. Hence every Catholic in St. Peter's Parish, who is in good standing with the Church, has the right to purchase burial rights in St. Peter's Cemetery.

14. Application for burial rights shall be made to: St. Peter's Church, P. O. Box 395, Blessing, Texas 77419.

15. Burial Rights must be acquired prior to any interment. It is strongly recommended that burial rights be acquired well in advance of need.

16. The Management reserves the right to specify the terms of purchase of burial rights. *The current rate of purchase is \$500.00 per grave for parishioners currently supporting St. Peter's or St. Robert's parish; and \$750.00 per grave for non-parishioners, and parishioners not supporting the parish financially.* Note that no grave is sold without Perpetual Care after January 1, 1987.

17. The title to the land remains always with the Church, and is not transferred with the burial rights.

18. Should a grave owner fail to abide by all the rules and regulations of the cemetery, the management may forfeit the burial rights of the grave owner.

19. It shall be the duty of the grave owner to notify the management of any change in his or her post office address. Notice, sent to the grave owner's last address on file in the cemetery records, will be considered sufficient and proper legal notification for all purposes - Deeds, Certificates, Statements, and Letters etc. It is advisable to have the address of relatives or successors on file at the Church office.

20. In the event of the death of a grave owner, any and all privileges of the grave owner shall pass to the grave owner's family, in the following order.

(a) The spouse of the owner of a lot, containing more than one grave, has the right of interment of his or her remains in that lot.

(b) If the lot owner shall have filed written instructions with the management, as to which of his/her survivors will have a right to burial, these instructions will be followed by the management.

(c) In the absence of valid written instructions filed with the management, the rights of interment shall devolve upon those entitled to succeed thereto by the laws of succession of the State of Texas.

21. The cemetery is intended for the interment of Catholics. However, since the Church does not wish to separate in death those who were united in life, the interment of non-Catholic members of a Catholic family will be permitted under certain conditions, but such interment shall be subject in each instance to the permission of the management.

22. The use of a grave or lot is for the interment of the grave owner, or the grave owner's relatives, and not for resale or profit. In no case shall a grave owner have the right to sell, transfer, exchange, or in any other way dispose of the said grave or lot, without the permission of the management.

23. If a grave owner wishes to sell a grave, he/she shall not charge more than the current rate of purchase charged by the management.

24. The new sale, transfer, exchange etc. shall be entered in the records of the cemetery.

25. No grave shall be opened without a written permit from the management.

26. No disinterment or removal of remains shall be allowed, except with the written permission of the management.

27. The management shall not be liable for issuing a permit, when wrong information is given concerning the right of a deceased person to be buried in a particular grave.

28. The management reserves, and shall have, the right to correct any errors that may be made either in interments, disinterment, or in the description, transfer, or conveyance of any burial rights.

29. All funerals on entering the cemetery shall be under the rules and regulations of the management.

30. The casket may not be opened at anytime within the cemetery, without the permission of the management.

Cremation

Respect for the Cremated Remains of a Body. The cremated remains of a body shall be treated with the same respect given to the human body from which they come. This includes the use of a worthy vessel "Urn" to contain the ashes, the manner in which they are carried, the care and attention to appropriate placement and transport, and the final disposition. The Urn contained within an "Urn Vault" can be placed in the grave, prior to an Adult burial. The "Urn Vault" may then be disinterred temporarily and then replaced on top of the adult burial. The "Urn Vault" must be clearly documented in the Cemetery Records. *Absence of the "Urn Vault" means the "Urn" may not be disturbed after burial.* The cremated remains should be buried in a grave or entombed in a mausoleum or columbarium. The practice of scattering cremated remains on the sea, from the air, or on the ground, or keeping cremated remains in the home of a relative or friend of the deceased

are not the reverent disposition that the Church requires. Whenever possible, appropriate means for the recording with dignity the memory of the deceased should be adopted, such as a plaque or stone which records the name of the deceased.

Cemetery policy concerning Cremated Human Remains:

31. No scattering of cremains; cremains must be buried in the ground or entombed in a niche or crypt. The Catholic Church does NOT approve keeping cremains in homes, etc.

32. No separation of cremains; the cremains of each person must be kept in one urn, not separated where family members will each have a portion of the cremains. Also, no cremains are to be made into jewelry, etc.

33. No mixing or comingling of cremains; cremains of another person or pet are not to be mixed with a person's cremains.

34. Two people may be buried in a grave as per the following: a) a single grave; 2 cremations or 1 cremation and 1 traditional burial*(See #37)

35. The standard plastic shipping container is not an acceptable urn but the family may purchase a different durable urn from the funeral home or crematorium. Regardless of the urn used, the family needs to communicate the exact size to the cemetery the day before the service so the proper sized hole will be dug. *IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE URN BE PLACED IN A SEALED VAULT.*

36. If the cremation is on an existing grave with a burial already; we provide a hole in the center of the grave, down to the existing casket or liner.

37. If the cremation is first on a new grave with a traditional burial to follow; The Urn must be contained in a Sealed Vault, buried at the Head of the grave prior to the traditional burial and then the cremains may be disinterred and placed on top of the traditional burial. The Urn Vault must be clearly documented in the Cemetery Records. The cremains are buried in the area reserved for the headstone and deep enough as to not be disturbed when the headstone is set later. Then the traditional burial will be done without disturbing the cremains.

38. If there are going to be only the two cremains; one will be buried at the head of the grave and the other at the foot of the grave.

39. The cemetery will provide the hole, adequate amount of dirt to back-fill the hole for a fee of \$100.00

Decorating the Cemetery

40. The right is reserved to the management to regulate the method of decorating the graves, so that uniform beauty may be maintained.

41. Each tombstone should be fitted with a flower receptacle, where flowers may be placed. Depending on the design of the tombstone, this receptacle may be placed in the center of the stone, or one receptacle on either side of the stone. If no receptacle is provided, flowers may be placed temporarily on the ground at the ends of the stone.

42. Only one (1) arrangement of flowers is permitted per grave. They are to be placed in the receptacles provided. They are never permitted to be

placed anywhere else. Graves must be left free from all obstacles that would hinder or retard the up keeping of the cemetery.

43. The management shall not be responsible for vases, floral pieces, and baskets of flowers left in the cemetery. Glass containers, tin cans, bottles and plastic containers are not suitable for cemetery use. Disposal thereof will be made as soon as possible.

44. The management reserves the right to remove from graves all floral arrangements that become unattractive, unseasonable, faded, or which take away from the beauty of the cemetery.

45. Votive lights and candles may be placed on graves during the month of November only, and will be removed by December 1st of each year.

46. No signs, notices or advertisements of any kind shall be allowed within the cemetery, except those placed by the management.

Care of the Cemetery

47. The following rights are hereby expressly reserved to the management, to be exercised at any time for the erection of buildings, or for any purpose or use connected with the care of, preservation of, or preparation for the interment of human remains or other cemetery purposes.

(a) To survey, enlarge, diminish, replace, altar in size, or otherwise to change any part or portion of the cemetery.

(b) To layout, establish, close, eliminate, or otherwise modify or change, the location of roads, walkways, or drives.

(c) To create easements and right of ways, over and through all of the cemetery premises, for the purpose of installing, maintaining, and operating pipe lines, conduits, or drains for sprinklers, drainage, electric or communication lines, or for any other cemetery purpose.

48. All improvements or alterations of graves in the cemetery shall be under the direction and subject to the approval of the management. Should such be made without its written consent, the said management reserves the right to remove, altar, or change such improvements or alterations at the expense of the grave owner.

49. All grading, landscaping, land-filling, and improvements of any kind, shall be maintained by the management. All trees, shrubs, and herbage of any kind, shall be planted, trimmed, cut or removed by the management.

50. After use, all graves must be maintained at the level of the surrounding ground. Carpet grass shall be allowed to grow over the grave as soon as naturally possible. All raising of mounds on the grave, trenching around it, and the prevention of grass from growing on it are forbidden.

51. No coping, curbing, fencing, hedging, planting of shrubs, borders, or enclosures of any kind, shall be allowed around the grave or lot. The management reserves the right to remove same if erected, planted, or placed.

Perpetual Care

52. No burial right is sold without Perpetual Care after January 1, 1987.

53. Perpetual Care, as defined in Numbers 7, 8, 9, and 10, currently costs \$100.00 per grave. Although the cost of Perpetual Care may be increased at any time, this shall in no way affect those already in possessing a right to Perpetual Care for their graves. For example, this right to Perpetual Care which in 1987 costs \$100.00 may cost much more a few years hence. However this increase will not mean that those already possessing perpetual care will have to pay extra. Hence the right you can buy today for \$100.00 will continue from now on, at no extra cost.

54. Investment of funds: The money collected for Perpetual Care of graves shall be invested by the management at the highest rate of interest obtainable, provided that the principal is always guaranteed safe.

55. No part of the principal shall ever be expended for any purpose whatsoever. Expenditure shall be limited to the interest received on the principal.

56. The income from Perpetual Care Funds shall be expended in such a manner as will be most advantageous for the care, repair, and maintenance of all or any portion of the cemetery.

57. Those grave owners who do not have Perpetual Care shall be charged per annum the equivalent of the interest which the banks would pay on investment of \$100.00.

58. All past indebtedness due to the cemetery must be paid before permits are issued, for example to open a grave or erect a monument.

Memorials

60. Any Grave owner has the right to erect a memorial on his or her grave. It is understood that all memorials..... Their size, material, location, care, erection, or removal ... are subject to the approval of the management, and to the rules and regulations of the cemetery, now in force, or hereafter adopted by the management.

61. The management reserves the right to prohibit the erection of, and to require the removal of any memorial that is inappropriate either in material, design, workmanship, size, location or which interferes with the general view or effect.

62. A memorial, as defined in Number 3, includes headstones, tombstones, monuments, and grave markers.

63. Curbs, fences, footstones, and above ground vaults shall not be permitted. Slabs of any kind shall not be permitted as coverings for graves.

64. Tin markers are temporary only, and should be replaced by proper monuments as soon as possible.

65. Memorials shall be placed at the head of the graves only. When an adult grave is used for two infants, the memorials must be placed together at the head of the first grave.

66. Dimensions for single memorials shall not exceed 3 feet in length, and 3 feet in height. Dimensions for double memorials shall not exceed 6 feet in length and 3 feet in height. A minimum of 2 feet shall be left between the bases of the memorials.

67. The management reserves the right to designate areas specifically set apart for the erections of flat memorials only.

68. Memorials of every kind must have suitable foundations. Foundations shall be of concrete, in area at least as large as the bottom of the memorial to be erected.

69. All memorials must be made of entirely first grade materials, and guaranteed to be free from flaws, defects, and tool marks.

70. Before entering into contracts with memorial dealers, grave owners shall have their memorial dealer submit a detailed plan and design of the proposed memorial to the management of the cemetery for approval. If the plan conforms to the rules of the cemetery, a permit will be granted.

71. An application is approved with the condition that the memorial is subject to final inspection by the management. Should the memorial, in the judgment of the management, not comply in full with the approved specifications, the memorial must be changed to comply, or be removed from the grave by the memorial dealer, at the request of the management, within 3 days of such a request.

72. Should a defect in material or workmanship become apparent before the lapse of 5 years from the date of setting, the monument dealer must replace the memorial without cost to the cemetery.

73. If any memorial or inscription becomes unsightly, dilapidated, or a menace to the safety of people in the cemetery, the management without being liable to any person will have the right either to correct its condition or remove the same, after having given notice in writing to the last known address of the grave owner, on file in the cemetery office.

Non-Cemetery Workers

74. Funeral directors, monument dealers, contractors, workmen shall operate as independent contractors, but shall abide by all the rules and regulations of the cemetery.

75. Damage done to lawns, graves, walls, drives, trees, shrubs, or other property by non cemetery workers, must be repaired by the dealer or contractor, or their principal.

76. The management reserves the right to stop all work of any nature when proper preparations have not been made; or the work is being done in such a manner as to endanger life or property; or when there is evidence of misrepresentation; or when work is not being executed according to specifications; or when any reasonable request on the part of the management is disregarded.

77. Non-observance of any of the rules and regulations of the cemetery by any dealer or his agent will be considered as sufficient reason to refuse all future requests for permits made by that dealer.

Accidents

78. The management shall take reasonable precaution to protect the property rights of grave owners within the cemetery, but the management distinctly disclaims all responsibility for loss or damage from causes beyond its control.

79. The management expressly disclaims liability for any injuries sustained by anyone while visiting or working in the cemetery.

Conclusion

80. The management reserves the right at any time to change, amend, alter, repeal, or add to any of these rules and regulations, or any part thereof, with respect to the cemetery or anything pertaining thereto.

81. All of the above rules and regulations will be strictly adhered to as of January 1, 1987.

82. Special cases may arise in which the literal enforcement of a rule may impose an unnecessary hardship. The management therefore reserves the right, without notice, to make temporary exceptions, suspensions, or modifications, in any of these rules and regulations, when in its judgment the same appears advisable; and such temporary exceptions, suspensions, or modifications, shall in no way be considered as affecting the general application of such rule.

83. Special consideration shall be given to memorial work erected in the cemetery before the above date. Old memorials, for example, which exceed regulation size, will be allowed to remain. However, whatever work is necessary to bring older parts of the cemetery into harmony with present rules and regulations will be carried out, so that our cemetery will be as beautiful and as harmonious as possible.