

St. Joseph Cemetery Policy
Westphalia, Missouri

last updated September, 2024

“When you prayed with tears and buried the dead ... I brought your prayer before the Lord.”
(Tobit 12:12)

Purpose and Nature of St. Joseph Cemetery

1. St. Joseph Cemetery is a ministry of St. Joseph Parish. Burial space is available for parish members, dependent children, spouses, and former members of St. Joseph Parish.
2. The cemetery committee consists of members appointed by the pastor. This committee oversees maintenance and operations of the cemetery.

Annual Dues

1. Each parish and former-parish household is asked to pay \$25.00 in cemetery dues every year. This contributes to the maintenance of the cemeteries.
2. Households are asked to pay their annual cemetery dues indefinitely.

Purchasing Grave Sites

1. Grave sites may be purchased before death or at the time of death. The cemetery committee will determine the location of the grave with consideration for the wishes of those purchasing the site.
2. If a household is current on annual cemetery dues, the cost of a grave site is \$100.
3. If a household is not current on annual cemetery dues, the cost of a grave site is \$500.
4. For non-parishioners, the cost of a grave site is \$500.
5. Up to four adjacent grave sites may be purchased at one time.
6. If a site had been purchased before death but annual cemetery dues are not current at the time of burial, then a fee of \$30 per year (up to no more than \$300 total) is assessed.

Sale of Pre-Purchased Sites

1. The cemetery committee must approve all transactions.

2. For a grave site that has been pre-purchased to be sold, maintenance dues must be current.
3. The parish will not buy back sites that have been previously sold but will accept them as donations.

Marker Maintenance

1. Maintenance of grave markers is the responsibility of the family or estate of the deceased.

Grave Maintenance

1. Decorative items such as flowers and other displays or tokens must be removed if they begin to look old or faded.

Burials

1. Burials must be made within a vault, concrete box, or a cremation urn.
2. After burial has taken place, a record is to be made in the parish's permanent records in accord with the *Code of Canon Law*, c. 1182.

Ceremonies and Displays

1. St. Joseph Cemetery is a Catholic cemetery. No ceremonies or displays incompatible with Catholic faith or morals (such as atheistic, Masonic, or pagan ceremonies, displays, or decorations) are permitted.
2. No glass vases may be used for cemetery decoration.
3. No live ammunition may be used in the cemetery, nor may live ammunition rounds be used as decoration.

Cemetery Clean-Up

1. Cemetery clean-up takes place annually, at a time determined by the cemetery committee, usually on the Saturday two weeks before Easter.

Cremation

1. Up to two cremation urns may be buried on a purchased grave site, at the cost of \$100 for one urn and \$200 for two urns on the same site.

Pastoral Exceptions

1. As part of St. Joseph Parish's ministry of charity and mercy, the pastor of the parish may grant exceptions to the above policy in special circumstances, for example, if a family is unable to afford a grave site (cf. *Code of Canon Law*, c. 1181).
2. The parish will pay the fee for grave sites for the burial of babies or any minor children on behalf of current, active parishioners.