

**St. Mary Parish Cemetery**  
**1040 E State Route 18, Tiffin, Ohio**

**- History -**

In August of 1829, on his return from a missionary tour to Green Bay, Wisconsin, Bishop Fenwick found that the number of Catholics in the Tiffin area had increased considerably. With the people's desire for the establishment of a parish being so great, he met with Josiah Hedges, the founder of Tiffin, and purchased from him an acre of ground to be used for a Catholic Church and Cemetery.

The first burying ground was located on the southeast corner of Madison Street, at the rear of the Ursuline Convent (the site of Calvert High School) adjoining the present Hedges Park. At that time, and for many years afterwards, it was a public cemetery.

During the pastorate of Father Tschenhens, on the flyleaf of the Register of Baptisms and Marriages, we find this inscription written in Latin: "On the 6th day of January, in the year of our Lord 1837, the Church and Cemetery of Tiffin were blessed by me, the undersigned, with due authority."

The old cemetery adjoining the first church on Madison Street having been filled, made the purchase of a new cemetery a necessity.

In 1878, Father Healy purchased from Michael Kuhn five acres of land on South Greenfield Road. The purchase price was \$1,500.00, which at that time was considered a high price for farm land. It was an excellent selection from the viewpoint of the character of the soil, which is sandy and slopes north and south, making for good drainage. It was surveyed and laid out by Patrick H. Ryan in August, 1878 and has been used by the parish since that time. It is situated in Clinton Township in Seneca County.

Due to the aforementioned cemetery lacking enough gravesites to accommodate the growing parish's needs, it was pertinent that additional land be purchased. A cemetery survey conducted among the parishioners revealed that they strongly favored purchasing land immediately adjacent to the present cemetery.

In 1993, Rev. Frank Murd, Pastor, approached the Osman family, owner of the property east of the cemetery regarding the purchase of his parcels of land adjoining our cemetery. St. Mary Church purchased seven acres of land at a price of \$8,500.00 per acre.

The new addition to the St. Mary Cemetery was dedicated and blessed by The Most Rev. James R. Hoffman, Bishop of the Toledo Diocese on September 24, 1995.

The cemetery entrance is adorned with two, 4' pillars, donated by Max and Marie Dell in memory of their loved ones, and two 6' pillars donated by the present Italian Families, also in memory of their loved ones who have had membership in St. Mary Parish since the turn of the century.

The statue of Our Lady of Grace at the entrance was donated by St. Mary's Altar/Rosary Society as a memorial to its deceased members.

Stations of the Cross statues have been purchased by parishioners and stretch along the eastern border of the property.

Knights of Columbus Council 608 donated the Monument to the Unborn, located in the northeast corner of the cemetery.

Memorials (plaques included) which parishioners have purchased in memory of a loved one are:

*U.S. Flag*  
*State of Ohio Flag*  
*St. Mary Flag*

Statues that grace the center of the cemetery and purchased in memory of loved ones are:

- **St. Anthony of Padua**
- **St. Francis of Assisi**
- **St. Joseph the Worker**
- **St. Therese, the Little Flower**

Presently available for purchase as a memorial for a loved one are:

- **Flowering trees**
- **Engraved bricks for the Unborn Memorial**
- **Donations to the Perpetual fund**

Each Memorial Day, a beautiful Mass is held at the Cemetery in honor of our deceased loved ones. Collection taken at the Mass is dedicated to the perpetual care of the cemetery.

Our history would not be complete without some acknowledgments:

Our parish has been very fortunate to have faithful and conscientious Sextons and volunteers who have given many years of service in the upkeep of our cemetery. We take this opportunity to thank each one for their dedication in maintaining a respectful burial ground for our loved ones.

Equally important are the various Business Managers and Secretaries our cemetery has had over the years. Our thanks also for their dedication in maintaining the records and finances for the cemetery.

### **Rules and Regulations of St. Mary Cemetery Tiffin, Ohio**

Cemetery rules and regulations are intended to provide for a sense of order and a consistent practice which will assure proper reflection on Church teachings and Christian beliefs. Recognizing that the purpose of rules and regulations sometimes are not completely understood by all persons, the Cemetery Association solicits its patrons' cooperation in order to achieve the Christian and Catholic atmosphere intended.

It was for the above specific reasons that the St. Mary Cemetery Board was established in 1948 under the authorization of Msgr. Raphael I. Kinnane. St. Mary Cemetery in the future will be platted, graded and ornamented under the direction of the Cemetery Board.

The Sexton of the cemetery, under the direction of the board, shall keep in order the boundaries and roads and maintain in good condition all burial sites, as well as new sections to be opened for burial. The Sexton, under the direction of the board, shall plant or remove trees and shrubs wherever appropriate.

### **Platting, Grading and Seeding**

As additional burial space is required, new sections shall be surveyed and platted. All such platting, grading, landscaping and seeding shall be done only under the order of the Cemetery Board.

The Cemetery Board reserves the right to enlarge, reduce, replat or otherwise change boundaries, roads or grades, and the right to lay, maintain, remove, replace or alter pipelines or drains which constitute improvement for the general benefit of the cemetery. It also reserves the right of ingress or egress over each lot to facilitate passage from other lots.

### **Cemetery Easement**

One principle definitely established in cemetery law is that the purchaser of a cemetery burial site does not have title to the land, but ONLY the right to inter the deceased thereon. The fee simple title remains in the person, corporation or other entity owning the cemetery premises. Ordinarily, lot owners are issued easements which, in legal form, resemble deeds to real estate. This form does

not supersede the rules and laws of the Cemetery Board, discipline of the Catholic Church, the Laws of the State of Ohio, and the Diocese of Toledo regarding burials and funerals.

The price and location of lots can be obtained at the parish office. Cost of the grave/s is to be paid at the parish office. Under certain circumstances, the board may permit a specified time payment plan. In these situations, at least one-third (1/3) of the purchase price of said lot must be paid on application. The balance of the payment on the easement must be paid within two (2) years, or the easement and the original payment revert back to the cemetery. The purchaser must be sent a notice of this action ninety (90) days before the expiration date. The purchaser must understand that no burial, marker, or monument may be erected on said lot until terms of the plan are fulfilled. After all requirements have been fulfilled, the purchaser will be given an easement and burial privileges.

A lot easement owner is not permitted to convey, devise, transfer or grant any burial privileges to any person other than the spouse or his/her own blood relatives subject to the foregoing rules. In very special circumstances, permission may be granted by the Cemetery Board or Pastor.

Within sixty (60) days after the death of a lot owner of record, the Cemetery Board shall be advised in writing of the name or names of the next of kin or co-owners who shall have control of the lot, and no co-owner shall bury, or cause to be buried on a common lot, any person without the written consent of the other co-owner/s. The Cemetery Board shall recognize the person designated to have control as the one qualified to make decisions concerning the lot, including burials, erection of monuments and markers, care of grounds and shrubbery and the payment thereof.

In the event any co-owner objects to the control exercised by the person designated, written notice thereof shall be given to the Cemetery Board and no burials will be permitted on the lot until settlement has been reached among the co-owners. No protests will be considered after burial. When there is sufficient burial space for all co-owners, the right to occupy the available space will be determined by the order of the deaths of the co-owners. Particular burial space reserved for a co-owner may be designated and noted in the Cemetery Board record.

### **Easements and Transfers**

Burial lots in St. Mary Cemetery are non-transferable, except to the St. Mary Cemetery Board. Such transfer can only be completed at the parish office where it can be properly recorded. Therefore, any easement or transfer of such a lot otherwise shall be invalid. If the owner of an easement wishes to transfer said easement, the Cemetery Board will purchase the easement or any portion thereof at the amount originally paid for the easement or in case of a partial lot, a pro-rated portion thereof.

## **Who May Be Buried in St. Mary Cemetery**

Under the terms of the easement bestowing the right of burial in the cemetery, the following are extended these privileges:

- The purchaser of an easement becomes eligible for burial.
- The spouse of the purchaser.
- Blood relatives of a purchaser, including adopted children and blood descendants thereof.
- The spouse of a lineal descendant or adopted child of the purchaser.
- Non-Catholics may purchase a burial space in our cemetery.
- Extraordinary cases when permission can be granted by the Pastor and /or Cemetery Board.
- Indigents

## **Interments**

All interments are subject to rules set forth in the St. Mary Cemetery Rules and Regulations Book.

- No interments will be permitted unless the casket is placed in a **top sealed** steel, masonry or concrete vault or box.
- No wood rough boxes will be permitted in St. Mary Cemetery, unless buried in a vault.

## **Cremation Rules**

- Two urns permitted on a single gravesite.
- One urn over one body burial permitted on single grave site if depth of vault permits.

## **Maintenance**

The meaning of “maintenance” involves only the cutting of grass and cleaning of lots, clipping around monuments/markers and trimming only the shrubs, evergreens and trees that have been planted under the general cemetery program. The term “maintenance” must not be interpreted as involving the maintenance, repair or replacement of monuments/markers, replacing or trimming shrubbery planted by lot owners, repair or replacement of any stone, bronze, concrete or masonry damaged through vandalism, an act of God, strikes, riots, explosions or by unavoidable accidents or otherwise.

## **Cemetery Memorials and Inscriptions**

Monument retail sales companies are required to submit requests for installation of monuments on an acceptable regulation form which supplies all details as to sizes and inscriptions. All applications must be approved before work begins. Monuments/markers made of bronze, approved granites and marble that will withstand our weather conditions will be the only materials permitted.

One hundred and eighty (180) days will be required following a burial before the installation of a monument "footer" so as to assure a more favorable ground condition for permanent level setting. If the Sexton determines conditions are acceptable, he may install before the 180 day limit.

The following specifications have been approved by the Cemetery Board for monuments or markers as of this printing:

- 16" long x 10" wide (maximum) for infants and children 2 years and under
- Single grave-base 32" long x 14" wide (maximum)
- Double grave-base 48" long x 14" wide (maximum)
- Triple grave-base 54" long x 14" wide (maximum)
- Bronze-base Memorial for Military Service Personnel 26" long x 14" wide. These can be flush with the ground, mounted on a base or placed on the back of the monument.

Maximum height of monument/marker (including base and tablet) must not exceed 32".

The foundation for the base of the monument or marker must be at least 36" deep and flush with the existing ground level. All markers must be set on permanent foundations. No concrete base shall be poured between October 10 and April 15 unless approved by the Cemetery Sexton. This insures the best quality of work, free from frost. No foundation orders to be put in for May 30 will be accepted after May 1. No foundation order to be put in for November 1 shall be accepted after October 1, unless approved by the Sexton.

It shall be the duty of the Sexton to take care of the cemetery, enforce the rules and regulations and see to the opening and closing of graves authorized by St. Mary Church. The Sexton is empowered to prevent the erection of monuments or markers or other construction at a time when damage could be done to drives and sod because of wet ground conditions.

While an interment or funeral is being conducted work must cease upon the request of the Sexton. Any person engaged in the erection of monuments or markers who damage other monuments or

markers, trees, shrubs, drives or sod shall be accountable to the St. Mary Parish Cemetery Board for such damage.

Should any monument or marker become unsightly, dilapidated or a menace to cemetery employees or visitors, the Cemetery Board shall notify the owner or heirs of said lot. If no action results, the Cemetery Board will notify the Sexton to proceed to make necessary corrections and charge same to easement owner or owners of the lot involved. No monument or marker can be removed from the cemetery unless a written request is presented to the parish office or Cemetery Board. ***No monument or marker shall be erected on any grave until the purchase price has been paid in full.*** Memorial dealers must abide by all rules and regulations hereto set forth. Any dealer who violates these rules and regulations shall be removed from the list of approved dealers.

While the cemetery employees will at all times exercise all possible care to protect monuments and markers and the lettering thereon while fulfilling their duties, no liability for damage or injury thereto is assumed by the Cemetery Board.

The Cemetery Board reserves the right to remove any trees, shrubs, bushes or any other materials that are unsightly or cause a safety hazard.

CEMETERY IS OPEN FROM DAWN TO DUSK (closed from dusk to dawn)

#### *DECORATIONS PERMISSIBLE*

- FLOWER BEDS – not to exceed the width of the monument or extend more than 12” from the front of the monument
- FLOWERS – fresh cut in approved vases, no glass, must be removed when they become withered and unsightly
- FLOWER POTS – one is allowed in front of the monument and must be 8” or less in diameter
- GRAVE BLANKETS – may only be placed on grave between November 1<sup>st</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup>
- LANDSCAPING MATERIAL – hardwood bark or cypress is only allowed in front of the monument
- FLAGS – only permitted on the graves between Thanksgiving Day and Memorial Day
- FLAG HOLDER or SERVICE MEDALLIONS

#### *DECORATIONS PROHIBITED BUT NOT LIMITED TO*

- LANDSCAPING MATERIAL – no stones, metal, plastic or wood outlining the grave or monument
- LIGHTS
- SHEPHERD HOOKS
- STATUES
- ORNAMENTAL OBJECTS
- PLANT MATERIAL – no bushes, trees or shrubs may be planted on burial areas of the cemetery

## *MAINTENANCE*

- FLOWER POTS – anything larger than 8 inches will be removed
- FRESH CUT FLOWERS – must be removed when they become withered and unsightly
- DECORATIONS – anything wind blown and dislodged will be discarded
- TRIMMING – any existing trees, shrubs or bushes is the responsibility of the respective owner

## **Priest's Burial Regulations**

St. Mary Parish reserves two sections of our cemetery for the repose of the souls of priests. The oldest section is located in front of the large cross to the rear of the original cemetery. Light of Faith Boulevard, adorned with a statue of Our Lady of Grace at the main entrance of the new cemetery is also a designated resting place for Priests.

To maintain uniformity, certain conditions will be observed:

- Parish will provide the plot plus the opening and closing of the grave.
- Priest or his family is to provide vault, marker and foundation for the marker.
- Marker is to be installed without a base on the foundation.
- Marker will be 24" long x 16" high x 10" thick with a tapered face.
- Color of marker is to be Canadian Pink

## **General**

Loitering, consuming refreshments and littering are all expressly **PROHIBITED**.

Riding bicycles, motorcycles or driving motor vehicles on cemetery property for pleasure or training are all expressly **PROHIBITED**.

St. Mary Parish Cemetery Board consists of the Pastor, members of the parish, the Business Manager and Secretary.

These rules and regulations, as of this date, October, 2023, supersedes all others. The Cemetery Board reserves the right to amend all rules and regulations as necessary.