

St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery

Serving the Catholic Community of Evansville since 1837

2500 Mesker Park Drive
Evansville, Indiana 47720

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Evansville, IN 47720
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7:30 am – Noon and 1:00 – 3:30 pm,
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812-423-1356 www.stjoecemetery.org

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Fall 2025



CREATING A LEGACY WITH YOUR LIFE AND YOUR DEATH

Fr. Gene Schroeder

PRESIDENT—ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY

Another year has come. For me, to borrow a sports term, it means that I am in the fourth quarter of my life, still with time to go, but definitely a sense of being more at the front of the line now. It has led me to think about how I am supposed to be with the time remaining in my life.

This is especially poignant for me, as I think back upon this past year. Every year brings its joys and challenges of course, but for me this past year has been especially challenging. For most of the year I walked with two dear friends of mine that I have known, one for almost fifty years and one for over forty-five. They were anchors in my life and this past year I witnessed both of them deal with aging and health challenges. Both of them died.

One of my friends was as close to being a soul mate as you can have. Even though she has lived far from me for the past thirty years, we talked many times a week. It's a rare gift to have someone to talk with on such a soul level. What was especially painful was that several months before she died she suffered a stroke which left her unable to speak. The phone conversations we had then were difficult as she found it hard to find words to say and even harder to say them.

My other friend was one that I had worked with over the years. For the last several years, health challenges left her unable to do a great deal. One of our weekly rituals for the past several years was to bring her communion each Sunday. She was a great cook, among many other things, so she

COME JOIN US AS WE PRAY FOR
ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED

ALL SOULS DAY MASS OF REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2

2:00 PM in the
Mausoleum Chapel



(Continued on page 3)

CEMETERY NEWS AND NOTES

This has been another busy year for our cemetery. Of course that is par for the course when you are mowing over seventy acres of grass and trimming around twenty thousand plus tombstones. We have an amazing cemetery staff who have become experts at using weed eaters with great efficiency. And if you happened to be at the cemetery when our crew members are using one of our six zero turn riding lawn mowers, you have witnessed poetry in motion as they weave in and out of the rows of tombstones with the greatest of ease. We are fortunate to have employees that take great pride in keeping our cemetery looking so great.

The day to day operation of the cemetery inevitable includes repairs to our drainage lines throughout the cemetery. More often than not, this repair involves replacing the original clay tile with PVC pipes. We have several miles of these drainage lines in the cemetery so we rarely get through a year without some section needing to be repaired and replaced.

In addition to the day to day operation of the cemetery we also completed the project of installed seven columbariums for cremation burials in our cemetery. More and more people are choosing cremation as an option at the time of the death of a loved one. Here at St. Joseph Cemetery we have offered the option of cremation burials for a number of years. That is in keeping with the teaching of the Catholics Church which has allowed people to be cremated for many years. As with other burials and in keeping with the dignity with which we hold the human body, the remains of loved ones are to be buried either in the ground or in a mausoleum niche.

For many years, we have offered people both of these burial options in our cemetery. We already have a special section in the cemetery grounds for couples who are choosing to be cremated, to be buried in the same plot. With the addition of these new columbariums we now have sufficient spaces for the cremated remains of people to be interred in our cemetery ground and entombed in our mausoleum.

This past March, our cemetery suffered some damage from a wind storm. The cross located in the center of the "Priest's Circle" toppled to the ground. Fortunately, it landed perfectly between two graves without causing any damage. The statues of St. Mary and St. John, however, were not so lucky as each statue was completely destroyed. The strong winds also caused damage to the east doors of the mausoleum. And those of you who have had to do storm damage repairs know that this process can often be long and tedious. The good thing is that all these things can be repaired and that this work is currently being done.



BURIAL OPTIONS AT ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY

St. Joseph Cemetery has been serving the Catholic community of Evansville since 1837. We offer a wide variety of burial options both interments (in ground burials) and entombments (mausoleum burials).

IN GROUND BURIALS

SINGLE LOT-- \$1,400 **DOUBLE LOT**--\$2,900

We also offer the opportunity to purchase a **MULTI-GRAVE LOTS**.
Check with the cemetery office for specific details and prices

MAUSOLEUM CRYPT BURIALS

SINGLE CRYPT

Costs range from \$4,050 --\$4,950 depending upon what level they are and whether the crypt is inside the mausoleum or on the outside of the mausoleum

COMPANION CRYPTS

Costs range from \$6,250--\$7,750 depending upon what level and whether they are inside the mausoleum on the outside of the mausoleum

CREMAINS BURIALS

For those people who are choosing the option of cremation, we now offer the option of being buried in the same niche or in the same grave plot. A new section in our mausoleum has been renovated to allow for companion niches. The cost for a single burial space in our mausoleum is \$1,850--\$2,050 depending on whether the space is on the inside or the outside of the mausoleum. We also have burial spaces for couples and the price of these spaces range from \$2,550--\$3,250 depending upon which level is chosen.

In addition, a special section has been set aside on the cemetery grounds, just west of the mausoleum for couples to purchase a grave plot for companion burials. These plots are smaller than a full size grave plot but still allow for people to purchase a grave monument on which to inscribe the names of both people being buried in this plot. The cost for an in ground burial lot for cremains is \$750. The cost for a double lot is \$1,500

OPENING AND CLOSING COSTS

With all burials there is an additional charge for opening and closing the graves and mausoleum crypt spaces. These costs for outside burials is \$1200 and for mausoleum burials is \$1,200. Opening and closing costs for cremation burials is \$750.

FINANCING OF BURIAL LOTS AND CRYPTS

St. Joseph Cemetery allows people to make payments over time with NO INTEREST charges. GRAVES--20% down and 20 payments CRYPTS: 20% down and 24 payments

(Prices good through December 31, 2025)

CAN I INTEREST YOU IN BUYING A PLACE FOR YOU TO BE BURIED?

If there ever was a conversation stopper this would probably be it. After all, who wants to talk about dying and being buried? If you are like most people you probably would like to avoid the issue entirely or only talk about it when absolutely necessary. Because death is not something we like to deal with, most of us are caught off guard when issues like buying burial plots come up.

It's likely that there are only a few times when we have to deal directly with this. The first is when someone in our family dies. The second more likely time is when we get a solicitation phone call asking if we are interested in buying a burial plot. We are not at our best in either of these situations and because of this we don't really know what are good questions to ask. When you are faced with the task of purchasing any burial plots, crypts or niches, it is important that you know the right questions to ask. Here are some questions to consider:

- Are there extra costs for opening and closing the grave?
- Is there a cost for using the facilities at the cemetery?
- Is there a cost for pouring the foundation for the monument?
- Are there extra charges for putting any plaques on the monument?
- Will there be additional charges at the time of the burial?
- If I pay for a burial plot over time, what are the finance charges.
- Are prices the same for graves everywhere in the cemetery?
- Are there funds set aside to care for the cemetery in the future?

Our financial resources are an important consideration in buying grave lots and monument. Often times, especially at the death of a loved one, the feelings of grief and love can lead us to spend money that we really don't have. Spending lots of money does not indicate that we love a person more any more than does spending less money indicate that we love a person less. It's easy to be enticed by an offer of "buy one grave spot and we'll give you the second one free." It's good to ask just what is included in this free offer.

Now is always a good time to make your memorial plans with us. Pre planning your burial is a great way to ensure that your wishes will be honored and will gain you peace of mind. It also allows you to make decisions without stress and relieve the burden on your family during a difficult time. Call us (812-423-1356) or email us jshake@evdiuo.org. We'll be happy to work with you.

REMEMBERING ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CEMETERY IN YOUR FINANCIAL PLANNING

Remembering St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery in your will is one of the ways you can ensure that our cemetery will continue to be a well maintained and holy resting place for your loved ones. There are many ways you can remember St. Joseph Cemetery in your financial planning—through an outright gift of money, through the sale of stocks and bonds or through the gift of property. Call us (812-423-1356). We welcome the opportunity to talk with you about all these opportunities.

prepared something for us to eat, and there were *(Continued from page 1)* always leftovers to take home.

While it has been several months since both of my friends have died, the grief is still present. I am happy that both of my friends no longer have to deal with the physical limitations they suffered, but I still miss them terribly. It's a bit like feeling anchorless and drifting about. My experience of falling and breaking my leg and having to have a hip replacement a year ago in August is an eerie reminder of the brokenness that can happen in the face of grief.

So now the question is where do I go from here? I've been listening to a talk given by Fr. Ronald Rohlheiser, a priest of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and regarded by many as one of the premier spiritual writers in the church today. He spoke about turning aging into a spiritual practice. He draws from the writings of John of the Cross, (1542-1591) a Carmelite priest and one of the great spiritual fathers of our Catholic Tradition. John spoke of the human journey as having three parts. In the first part of our life we are trying to figure out who we are, how we fit into the world and what kind of person we will be.

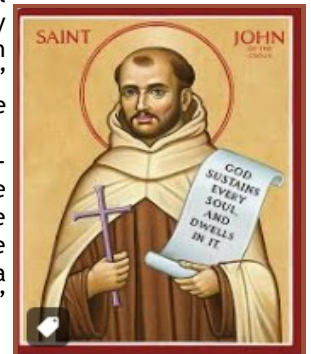


At some point we figure this out—we decide to get married, we settled into a job, we raise a family. This second part of our faith journey occupies much of our life. It is an active period and is filled with lots of "doing." We raise a family, we put our energy into our job to provide for our family. John of the Cross would talk about this time as learning how to give our life away. The fundamental question for us is "how am I being called to love?" And that happens when we are busy with the activities of our children, coaching a baseball team, being part of school PTO projects, giving my time and energy to a civic organization, or a parish project. During this time we use the "take charge" energy, and the ability to make things happen in the work we are about. And that is a good thing.

But at some point in life, we are all going to be invited to entered the third stage of our life. This stage is what John of the Cross called "learning how to give your death away." What he means by this is that we will all be invited to move from an active life to a passive life, or perhaps better, from a life of "doing" to a life of "allowing."

If we look at the life of Jesus we can see this journey being played out. We see that much of what Jesus did in the beginning of his ministry was very active. He "went" to towns and villages to "preach" the good news, he "healed" the sick, he "fed" the people, "he wept" at the death of his friend Lazarus.

And then, in the very last part of his life, he moved *(Continued on page 4)*



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from “doing” to “allowing.” During this time, he was *(Continued from page 3)* “arrested and led away.” He was “questioned” first by the religious leaders and then by Pilate. He was “condemned to death.” He was “beaten by and forced to carry the cross.” And finally he was “nailed to the cross.” All these things were being done to him.

At some point in our lives, we will all come face to face with the fact that we are no longer able to do what we were once able to do. What we once gave our time and energy to is no longer needed. What do I do now? If my purpose for living was wrapped up into what I did, what do I do when I can no longer do that?

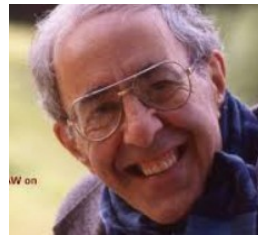
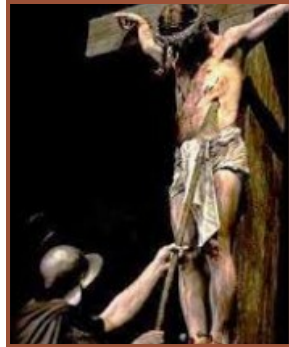
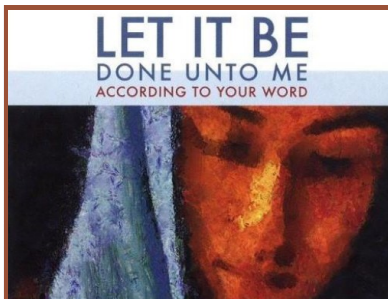
This is a challenging time especially in a world that values activity and productivity. But John of the Cross tells us that this stage of our life is an opportunity to give life. That is really what he means by learning to give our death away. We read in the passion account from the Gospel of John, that as Jesus hung on the cross and died, the soldiers pierced his side with a lance and “immediately blood and water flowed from his side.” Blood and water are signs of life. Women who have given birth know this all too well since the moment of giving birth is accompanied by the flow of blood and water. Jesus, hanging in crucifixion on the cross, when he is in a very passive position, not able to physically “do” anything, is still giving life. In his “passivity”, in his “allowing,” he is giving life.

We can even look at all the work that Jesus did with his disciples trying to teach them and show them how to live. The disciples never really got what he was talking about. Jesus, would often say “How long I have been with you and still you do not understand.” But then, when Jesus stopped “doing,” and “allowed” his journey to take him to his death and resurrection, the disciples finally got what he was talking about.

Being willing to embrace this stage of life requires a lot of intentional effort. I have heard many people over the years say, “I don’t know why I am around. I can’t do anything. I wish I was dead. And, in fact, many people can enter this period kicking and screaming and be filled with resentment and anger.

In our world now, since we value doing and being productive, there is a growing belief that when this time comes for me I should have the right just to end my life. When we haven’t been training in “giving our death away” so it is easy to see how this would be an attractive alternative to people.

John of the Cross reminds us that there is a difference between resigning ourselves to this journey as opposed to submitting to it. Resigning ourselves to it has a lot of the energy of just giving up that can be accompanied by a lot of anger and resentment. This is especially the case when we face the physical limitations of getting older. But when we look at the life of Jesus, we hear these words “though he was in the form of God, he did not demand equality *(Continued on page 5)*



with God, but rather emptied *(Continued from page 4)* himself and became obedient to death.” (Phil 2: 6-11). Submitting has the energy of Mary’s “yes” when she said “let it be done to me according to your word.”

Another way to say this is that Jesus allowed himself to be fully part of the human journey. John of the Cross would say that part of this journey is giving our death away. If we live long enough, all of us will face this. Here’s is how Fr. Henri Nouwen, (1932-1996) one of the gifted spiritual writers of our time put it. *At a certain point in our lives the question is no longer: “What can I still do so that my life makes a contribution?” but “How can I now live so that my death will be an optimal blessing to my family, the church, and the world?” The central question is not, “How much time remains?” but rather, “How can we prepare so that our dying will be a new way for us to send our spirit and God’s spirit to those whom we have loved and who have loved us? Our lives belong not just to us but also to others. This applies to our deaths as well. If we die with guilt, shame, anger, or bitterness, all of that becomes part of our legacy to the world, binding and burdening the lives of our family and friends. It is possible, on the other hand, to regard our dying as a gift - and opportunity to pass along to others our own sense of peace with God.*

Fr. Ron Rohlheiser has spoken and written extensively about this journey of our faith. His first book on this topic is entitled *The Holy Longing* which speaks about the first part of our journey—the struggle to get our lives together and the longing for meaning in our lives. It provides a basic guide for being a follower of Jesus. The second book in this series is entitled *The Sacred Fire*. In this book he speaks about the second part of our faith journey—learning how to give our lives away in a meaningful way and learning how to help make other peoples’ lives more meaningful.

His third book in this series is entitled *Insane For The Light*. In this book he speaks of the third journey of our lives —learning how to give our death away. He explains it this way: *We lack a developed spirituality for the second-half of life. Our churches and theological circles have too little to offer in terms of spiritual guidance for us as we move beyond our youthful years, especially as this pertains to aging and moving towards death.”*

Setting itself within the archetypal image of Forest Dwelling wherein spiritual seekers withdraw into the deep forest to live there and be instructed by the Elders, this book draws on scripture, the mystics, select spiritual writers, and the best in secular literature to offer some spiritual and psychological counsel for our wisdom years. Becoming wise elders is learning how to move from anger to gratitude, from bitterness to forgiveness, from “imagination” to faith, from optimism/pessimism to hope, from letting our wounded ego resist love to letting ourselves be loved, from sophistication to simplicity, and from control to surrender.

Are you ready for this journey? It will surely come to all of us, in one from or another. The blessing we have is that we have guides who can show how we can navigate this journey and leave a legacy for others in the process.

