

Parish Cemetery Seminar

Prepared for Parish Cemeterians of the Madison Diocese

September 24, 2024

Feast of Our Lady of Mercy

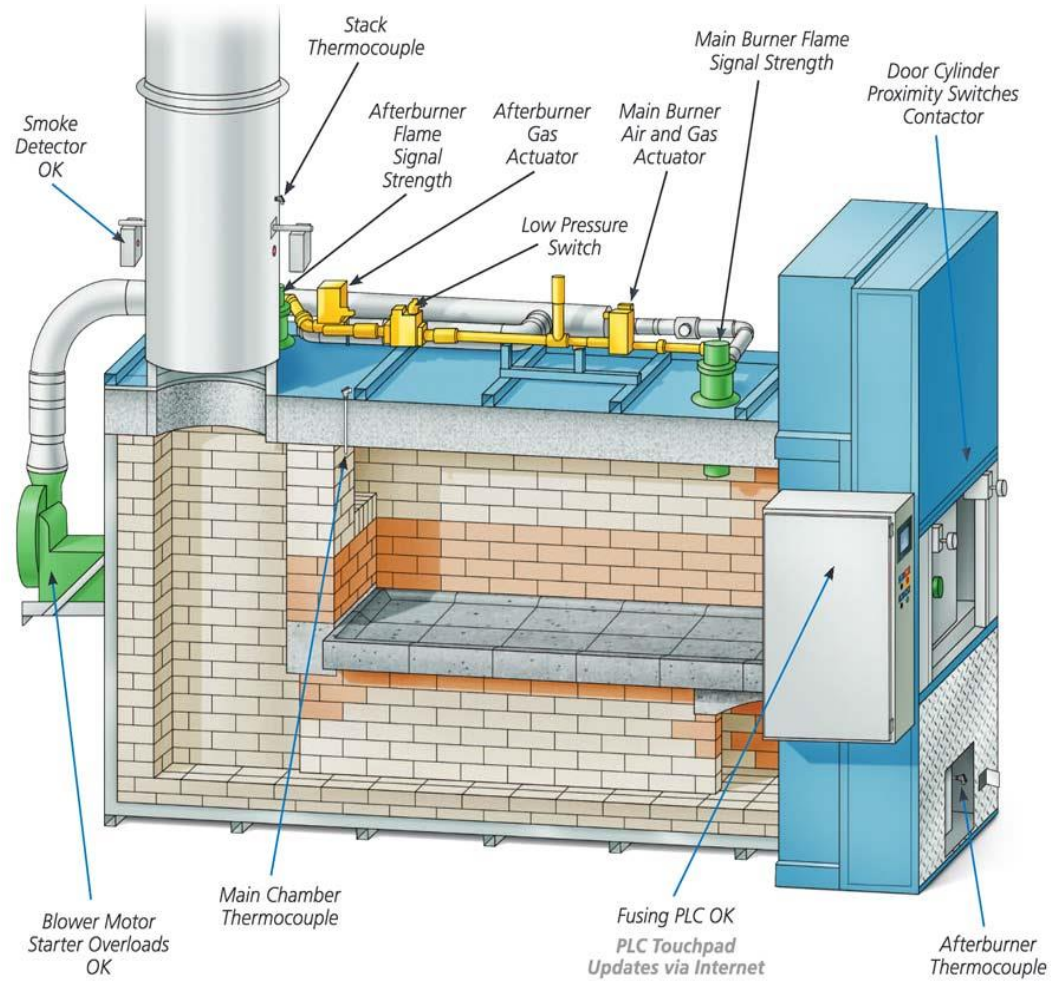


**Richard A.
"Dick" Ruth's
Obit
(d. Aug. 20, 2024)**

"Dick's soul did not go shooting straight up to Heaven like everybody else's does, but made a detour to Purgatory where he will remain until he is purified enough to stand before his all-perfect maker."



Cremation Equipment - retort

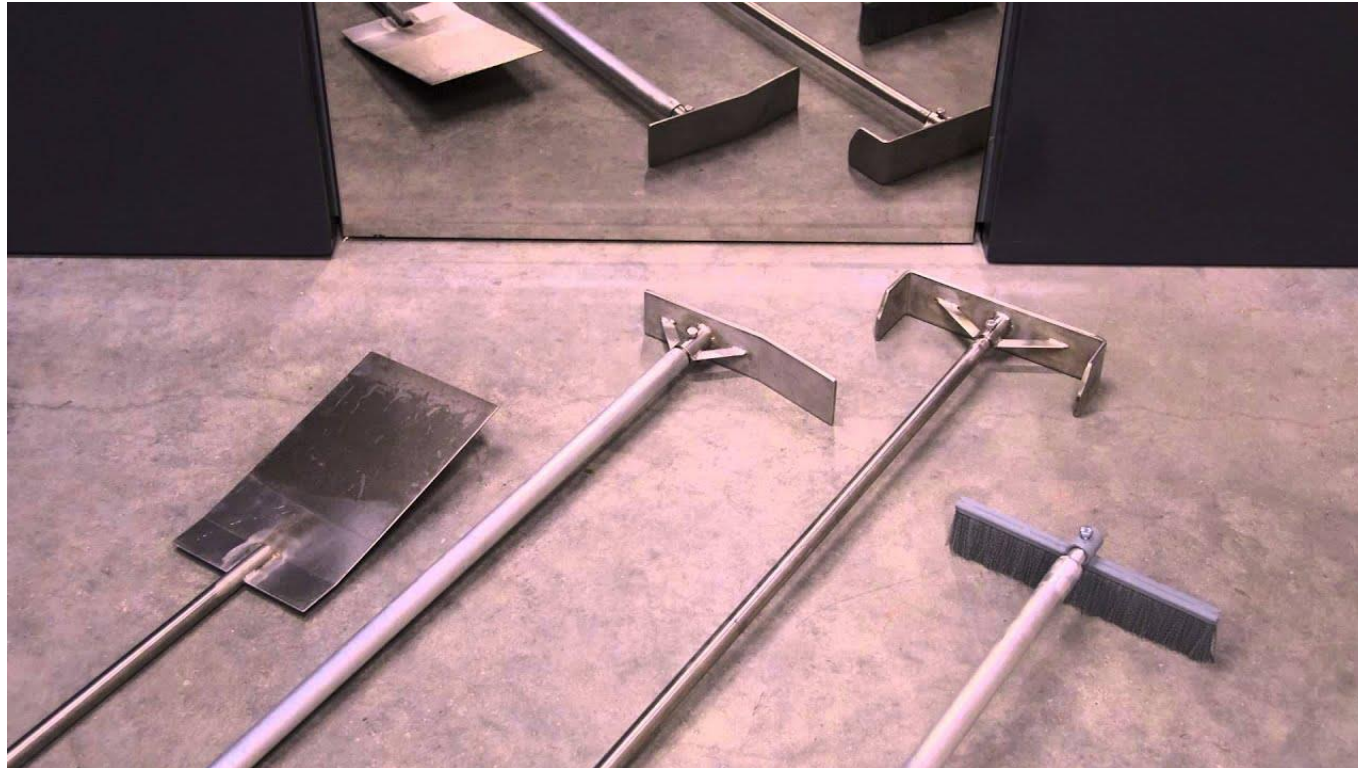


What Doesn't Burn



Parish Cemetery

Cremation Equipment - rakes



“Cremulator”

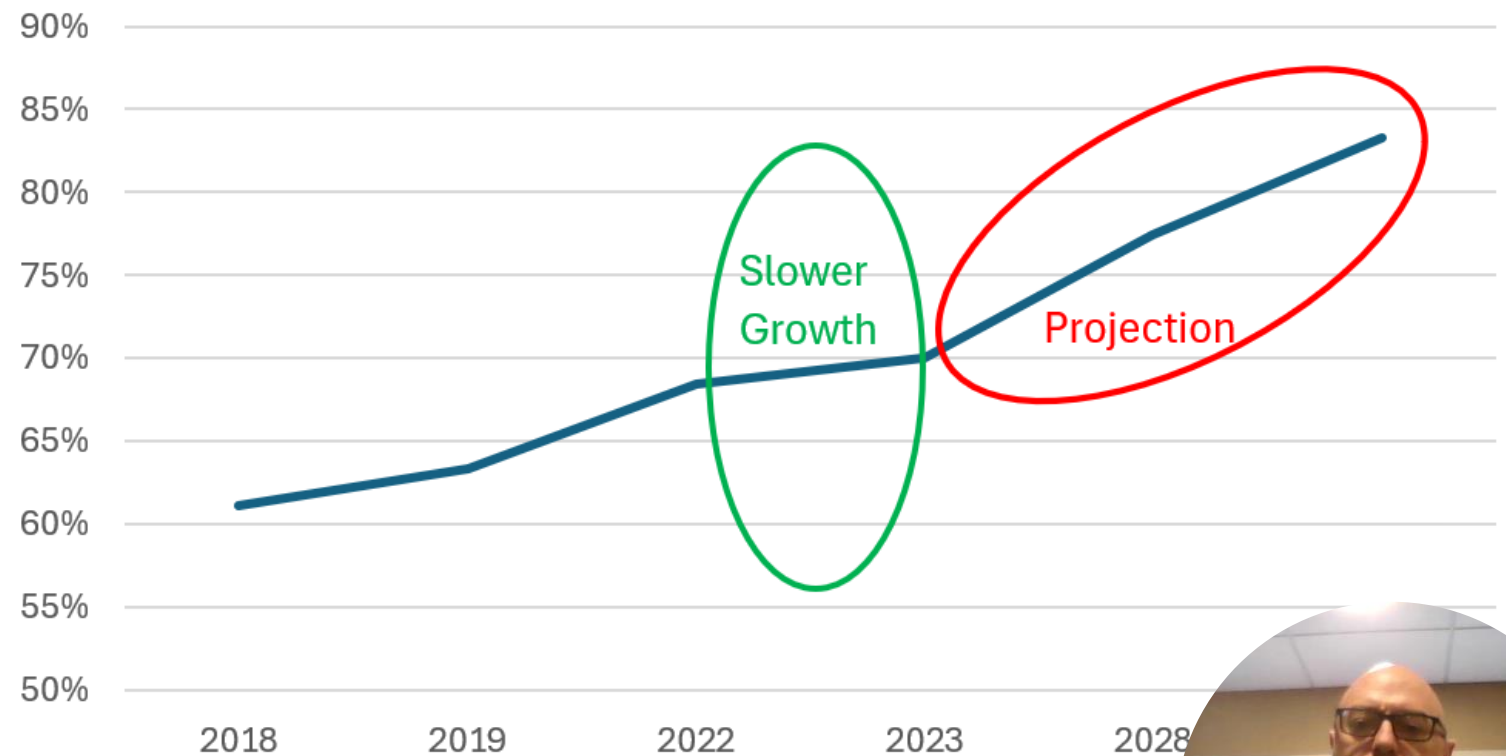


Parish Cemetery

**Cremation Rate = Total
Cremations/Total
Deaths**

Wisconsin Cremation Rate

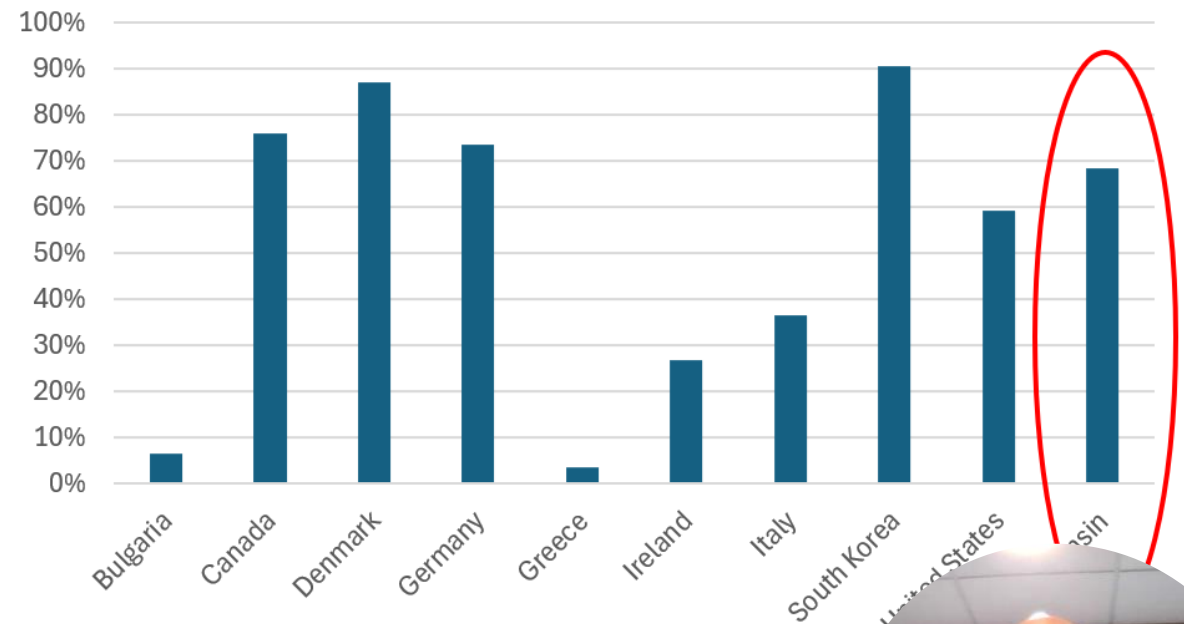
CANA Stats and Projections for WI: Cremation %



Wisconsin vs (select countries of) The World

2022 Cremation Rate Comparison

2022 Cremation Rate Comparison
Using statistics from CANA annual report



Cremation Considerations

Sentire cum ecclesia - Think with the Church

“Through proper instruction and persuasion, Ordinaries are to ensure that the faithful **refrain from cremation** and not discontinue the practice of burial **except when forced to do so by necessity.**”

- Pope St. Paul VI, 1963

“The Church insistently recommends that the bodies of the deceased be buried in cemeteries or other sacred places... **The Church continues to prefer the practice of burying** the bodies of the deceased, because this shows a greater esteem towards the deceased.”

- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2016



Parish Cemetery

Cremation Considerations, Continued

Congregation For The Doctrine Of The Faith, Instruction *Ad resurgendum cum Christo* (2016)

“When, for legitimate motives, cremation of the body has been chosen, **the ashes of the faithful must be laid to rest in a sacred place, that is, in a cemetery.**”

“the conservation of the ashes of the departed in a domestic residence is not permitted.”

“In order that every appearance of pantheism, naturalism, or nihilism be avoided, **it is not permitted to scatter** the ashes of the faithful departed in the air, on land, at sea or in some other way, nor may they be preserved in mementos, pieces of jewelry, or other objects.”



Parish Cemetery

How Should We Handle Higher Cremation Rates?

- Discourage cremation
- 2nd (and 3rd, and 4th) Rights of Burial
- Offer smaller graves.
- Ossuaries
- Can't take back parts of graves once sold, even if they are used for cremation.

56			56			56			56		
(1)	54 (3)	54 (5)	55			55			54 (1)	54 (3)	54 (5)
(2)	53 (4)	53 (6)				54			53 (2)	53 (4)	53 (6)
(1)	53 (3)	53 (5)	53 (1)	53 (3)	53 (5)				53 (1)	53 (3)	53 (5)
(2)	52 (4)	52 (6)	52 (2)	52 (4)	52 (6)	52 (2)	52 (4)	52 (6)	52 (2)	52 (4)	52 (6)
(1)	52 (3)	52 (5)	52 (1)	52 (3)	52 (5)	52 (1)	52 (3)	52 (5)	52 (1)	52 (3)	52 (5)
(2)	51 (4)	51 (6)	51 (2)	51 (4)	51 (6)	51 (2)	51 (4)	51 (6)	51 (2)	51 (4)	51 (6)
(1)	51 (3)	51 (5)	51 (1)	51 (3)	51 (5)	51 (1)	51 (3)	51 (5)	51 (1)	51 (3)	51 (5)
(2)	50 (4)	50 (6)	50 (2)	50 (4)	50 (6)	50 (2)	50 (4)	50 (6)	50 (2)	50 (4)	50 (6)
49			49			49					
48			48			48					



What is an Ossuary?



About green or natural burials

What is it?

- *Reducing end-of-life environmental impact by choosing: No embalming, no casket, no vault, natural marker, and/or no power tools.*

Is it Catholic?

- *Yes, or at least it can be.*

Is it legal in Wisconsin?

- *Yes.*

Is it permitted?

- *Depends on the pastor, who makes the rules for parish cemeteries.*

Is certification by the Green Burial Council required?

- *No.*



Glass Coffins



Will they become popular?

Remains to be seen!



Sexton's Job Description

- **Maintenance** – mowing, plowing, trees, fences, roads
- **Grave Sales** – “customer” service, knowledge of inventory, cash handling, record keeping
- **Funeral Coordination** – scheduling, marking grave, digging, prep graveside for committal, close grave, grow grass
- **Records Maintenance** – grave ownership, burials (name, location,+++), payments, maps, remaining inventory
- **Inventory monitoring** – report to pastor annually on years before full.



Sexton's Job Description (continued)

- **Capital Needs** – Alert Pastor and Cemetery Committee of remaining life of roads, fences, etc.
- **Perpetual Care** – Support the dedication of a portion of all sales to perpetual care.
- **Cemetery Committee Support** – attend any meetings needed.

At each parish, duties may be divided up differently. Work with your pastor!



Should there be a separate section for unbaptized infants?



1917–1983

From 1917 to 1983 there were detailed instructions about who could be buried in Catholic cemeteries.



1983

Since 1983, there had not been canon law or other Church guidance supporting the exclusion of the unbaptized from burial in Catholic cemeteries.



What is the best
equipment for
trimming?



Do we really have to keep records???

157.62(5) RULES; RECORDS.

The cemetery board shall promulgate rules requiring cemetery authorities and licensees to maintain other records and establishing minimum time periods for the maintenance of those records.



WI Stat 157.62(5) and CB 2.06

The records shall include detailed information for each deceased person buried in a cemetery, including all the following:

(a) The name of the deceased.

(b) The last-known address of the deceased.

(c) The date of birth of the deceased.

(d) The date of death.

(e) The date of burial.

(f) The exact location in the cemetery where the deceased is buried.

(g) The name of the person authorizing the burial and his or her relationship to the deceased.

(h) The name of the funeral establishment.

(i) The type of burial vault used, if any.

(j) The type and style of the grave marker, monument, or other memorial used.



Burial Scheduling Form

ID# _____		INT/ENT ORDER # _____		DAY: _____	
Funeral of: _____				DATE: _____	
Burial Location: _____				TIME: _____	
DOB: _____		DOD: _____		GRAVESIDE <input type="checkbox"/> CHAPEL <input type="checkbox"/> IMMEDIATE <input type="checkbox"/>	
SERVICE INFORMATION:				VAULT TYPE: _____	
Church: _____				TCASKET _____	
Date of Service: _____		Time of Service: _____		URN TYPE/SIZE: _____	
RESPONSIBLE PARTY:				VETS: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name: _____				Lead in: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Address: _____				Comments: _____	
City/State/Zip: _____				_____	
Phone: _____		Relationship: _____		FUNERAL HOME: _____	
email: _____				_____	
		CHARGES:		PHONE: _____	
		INT/ENT \$ _____		F. DIRECTOR: _____	
		2nd Right \$ _____		Has Marker? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Date called in: _____		Vault \$ _____		MATCH: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Inscription \$ _____		TYPE: _____	
		TOTAL: \$ _____		Need inscription: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Contract PIF? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A					



Parish Cemetery Easement

NO.

PARISHCORPORATIONNAME

CEMETERYNAMCE CEMETERY

CITY, WISCONSON

This Easement, made this _____ day of _____ 20__, WITNESSETH, that this Parish Corporation, organized under the laws of the Catholic Church and of the State of Wisconsin (Ch. 187.12, Wis. Stats. 1953), the Grantor, in consideration of the sum of \$_____ in hand paid, grants and assures unto _____, the Grantee,

AN EASEMENT AND LICENSE FOR BURIAL PURPOSES WITH A GUARANTEE OF INCOME CARE IN:

Grave(s) _____ Lot _____ Row _____ In the aforesaid cemetery.

Sample Easement

Available at madisondiocese.org/parish-cemeteries





APPLICATION TO ERECT MEMORIAL

TO: _____ CEMETERY

Application is hereby made for permission to erect a memorial and for you to construct a foundation, if necessary, on the following location:

GRAVE: _____ LOT: _____ BLOCK: _____ SECTION: _____

and to permit the monument dealer who signs this application to furnish the memorial in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Cemetery.

THIS MEMORIAL WILL HAVE A ROMAN CATHOLIC EMBLEM ON IT IN A PROMINENT PLACE AND IT WILL NOT HAVE ON IT ANY EMBLEM, INSIGNIA, OR INSCRIPTION INCONSISTENT WITH ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE. IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT ALL MEMORIAL WORK IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE RULES OF THE CEMETERY IN ANY WAY AFFECTING MONUMENTS, MARKERS, HEADSTONES, OR ANY OTHER STRUCTURES OR MEMORIALS, THEIR MANUFACTURE, LOCATION, CARE, ERECTION, REMOVAL, OR IN ANY OTHER REGARD, SUBJECT TO ALL OTHER RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE CEMETERY NOW IN FORCE OR HEREAFTER ADOPTED.

Should any memorial, in the opinion of the director or superintendent, become unsightly, dilapidated, or dangerous to visitors, it is understood that the Cemetery shall have the right either to correct the condition or to remove the same at the expense of the lot owner or his or her heirs, after giving due notice in writing to the last known address of the lot owner on file in the cemetery office.

**Sample Application from Memorial Company for
permission to erect a memorial**

Available at madisondiocese.org/parish-cemeteries



Pricing

- Raise prices annually
- Graves at different cemeteries do not have to have the same price
 - Location, location, location!
- Good to have in-parish and non-parish pricing.
- 2nd rights of burial
- Perpetual care
- Pricing structure same within pastorate.



Software

What's out there? Who's using what?

- **MoserSoft** – budget friendly
- **Ramaker** – locally-owned
- **Burrowes** – used by several parish cemeteries now
- **HMIS** – diocesan software, not easy to use
- **Behar** – diocesan software mapping
- And many more...



Adventures in Cemetery Mapping

Resurrection Cemetery Lawn Crypt



44	Kinney	Ryan	double	double	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single	Single
43	Siegert	Klitzke	Linde	double	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single	Single
42	Sather	Leis	double	double	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single	Single
41	Greene	Dorman	double	double	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single	Single
40	Valley	Streich	Kaegi	double	double	Single	Acker	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single
39	Reynolds	Kirley	Gmeinder	Skinner	Leiterman	double	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single
38	Wright	Mulhern	Eyre	Hungerford	Alery	Doyle	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single
37	Bull	Baker	Festge	Hoffman	Stein	Puent	Esser	Single	Fleming	Single	Single	do not sell	Boyes	Single	Single
36	Ransom	double	Reed	Kaszubski	Fleck	Stein	Ryan	Reed	Fleming	Single	Single	do not sell	Boyes	Hario	Single
35	15	Reif	Jacobs	Strmecki	Gaffney	Michalek	Fitzpatrick	Bohn	Buenzli	Hird	Perras	Skaife	Trameri	Schmelzer	Kuehn
34		Buechner	Haskins	Brys	Raymond	Lang	Sellmeyer	Simle	Parisi	Steiger	Senke	Wiese	Reynolds	Moriva	Frisch
33		14	Bennett	Frye	Schwab	Scott	Sellmeyer	Trummer	Parisi	Meinke	Senke	Lumina	Farrell	McGinnity	Schott
32			Vetter	Karls	Schmid	McGuire	Boehme	Rauls	Malcheski	Kohrs	Kaether	Fromm	Schultz	Golden	Schwoegler
31			Miller	Hall	Miller	Sullivan	Daun	Kiley	Fleming	Schroud	Smith	Schiro	Adams	Waldron	Schneider
30			Dohm	Rieder	Uebersetzg	Murphy	Maier	Joyce	Schlothauer	Brown	Kramer	Tantillo	Hario	Anderson	Smithback
29			Costello	Brown	Sutter	Stern	Schantz	Schuh	Greenhalgh	Cady	Lynch	Gill	Lemanski	Fettig	Cross
	JESUS		13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
			13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
28			Hallett	Widen	Fisher	Rock	Schaeffer	Carrao	Gehl	Murphy	Schraufnager	Richter	O'Leary	Fiscus/Finn	Lustgraaf
27			Grout	Blid	May	Cuta	Ramsey	Ryan	Gaudette	Malina	Lumina	Laessig	Gill	Colby	Moen
26			Lustgraaf	DeMarb	Abel	Zwaska	Hoppe	D'Orazio	Hammersley	Kelly	Bariola	Feisst	double	Cascio	Gundermann
25			Cavanaugh	Brown	Lustgraaf	Adrian	Susee	Sylve	Buenzli	double	double	double	double	Slane	Ludlow
24		14	Holley	Kroeger	Kouba	Shelton	O'Brien	R.D'Orazio	double	double	double	double	double	Slane	Benavides
23			Cooper	Gardner	Acker	Marshall	Purcell	double	Provenzano	double	double	double	double	Slane	Dunn
22	15	Cooper	Wendt	Thoma	Stein	Wacek	Koller	double	Miller	Zeier	double	double	double	Slane	Stormer
21	Schaub	Anderson	Mead	Koch	Frank	Kuntz	Koller	Koller	Miller	Zeier	Single	do not sell	Single	Slane	Wise
20	double	Cass	Beyler	North	double	double	Koller	Koller	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Slane	Single
19	Mann	Gallagher	Hauser	Cerutti	O'Leary	O'Connell	Koller	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Slane	Single
18	Pierick	Stremcha	Gehrmanr	LeMay	Jaskowski	Rotter	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single	Single
17	Uphoff	Durst	Heiss	Thompson	double	Leach	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single	Single
16	Pierick	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single	Single
15	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	Single	do not sell	Single	Single	Single

Good idea, bad maps

[illegible]

- 

Addressing the problem

The image shows a grid-based map of a cemetery. Each cell in the grid represents a plot, with numbers indicating row and column coordinates. A popup window is displayed over a specific plot, providing detailed information about it.

Resurrection Cemetery Lawn Crypt Section 12 29 | [Google Maps](#)

Property Location & Info:

Lot Space ID: 19657
Location: Resurrection Cemetery
Section: Lawn Crypt Section
Plot:
Row: 12
Space: 29
Type: Lawn Crypt

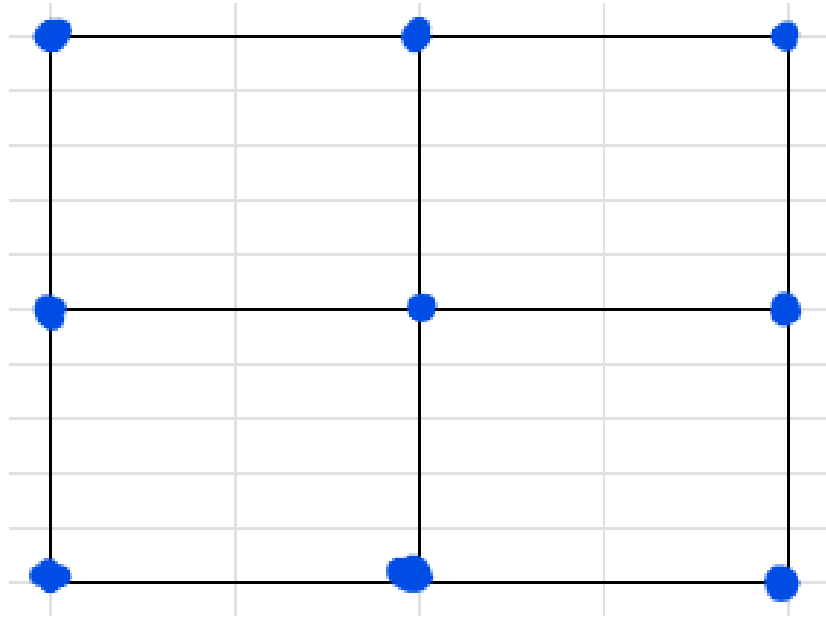
Occupied
(1)

Owner & Deceased Info: ...
[Zoom to](#)

- Survey by Wyser
- Engineering by Wyser
- Staking by Wyser
- **Mapping** by Behar – sales map integrated with database



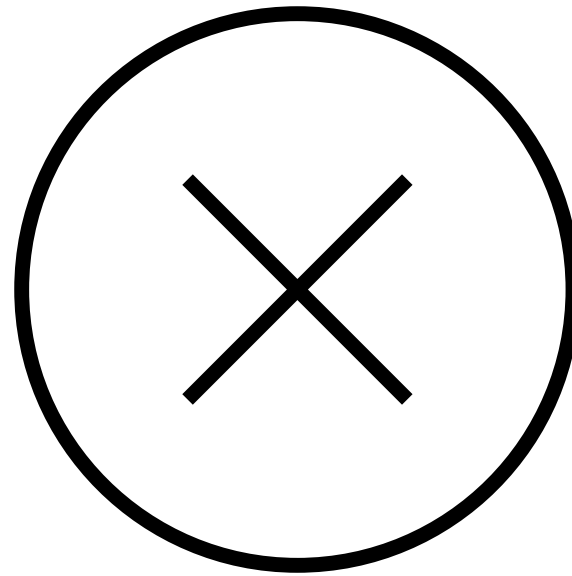
Plotting a new section



- Be clear about grave size. 40" x 9' is pretty typical.
- If extending a grid, it's fairly easy. Keep grave size the same!
- If it's a brand new section and you don't know anyone with surveying experience, you might want to hire a surveyor.
- Use stakes to identify locations, and measure from the stakes when digging.

Take my
cemetery,
please!

“If there is no sexton, can the
diocese manage our cemetery?”



Will assets of individual cemeteries be kept separate in the mergers?

- No. It's a merger.
- The banking structure for a parish cemetery operation is:
 - one operating account (checking account) and
 - one perpetual care fund account (investment account).
- Donor intent will be respected.
- Each case will be carefully evaluated.



Financial Structure

- A cemetery should have two dedicated accounts: an operating account and a perpetual care fund.
- Cemetery accounting should be on Quickbooks.
- Merged parishes may have several different parish cemetery accounts that can be merged into one operating account and one perpetual care fund.

