



POINTS OF INTEREST

St. Joseph Parish Cemetery, Foothill Road

-Seasonal Visiting Hours are posted at the cemetery gates, and visits are encouraged by family, friends and other living loved ones of the deceased.

-Living loved ones are free to personalize graveside care practices for the deceased, and to maintain the grave areas as they see fit. Except in egregious cases as determined by the parish, the parish refrains from active policing of individual gravesites. However, visitors may generally want to refrain from items that could be trip hazards or could inhibit maintenance in the area. Environmentally-friendly items that can easily decompose in the soil are always welcome.

-We honor and respect the individual discretion of graveowners, the lavishness of God's creation and the eclectic assortment of trees, cultures and grave marker styles in our small but sacred cemetery space. A more homogenous and meticulous look is not only unrealistic, it is for others to create elsewhere.

-Regular maintenance of the cemetery is provided by both a third-party contractor and parish staff, subject to a variety of conditions, including but not limited to: seasonal ground conditions, anticipated busier visiting days (Christmas, Easter, Mother's Day, All Souls Day and Veterans Day, etc.) and parish cash flow and financial constraints.

-Check the parish schedule for dates and times of the prayer services and Masses held in the parish cemetery, including but not limited to: Easter Sunday Sunrise Mass, All Souls' Day, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, along with various seasonal or special dates. As Catholics, we honor our foremost duty and covenant to the deceased with prayer for them, and this is our understanding of the prime function of a parish cemetery, whether that prayer is private and individual or communal and public.

-Given the nature, revenue streams and resources of a small parish cemetery, comparisons to conditions at private, municipal or diocesan cemeteries are neither relevant nor helpful. Before making queries, persons are also advised to consider the limiting factors of age and terrain of the St. Joseph Cemetery, as well as refraining from rendering opinions or judgments about matters that are often simply personal taste.

-The cemetery worksite (dumpster, dirt pile, etc.) serves an operational and not an aesthetic function, and, with the cemetery space at full capacity, its current location is unavoidable.

-“Perpetual care” is a lovely term in cemetery parlance but contains no magical powers. Indeed, the parish honors its covenant for cemetery care, yet must subsidize the cemetery almost entirely out of its dwindling operating funds. We are doing the best we can with limited resources for the living and the dead. Again, those inclined to exaggerate the reach of perpetual care are asked to consider, for example, how far a \$5 donation for “perpetual care” in the 1940s could possibly extend into the future, especially in a cemetery where there is currently no ability to receive new souls.

-As of Spring 2021, we are engaged in very early conversations about the possibility of a columbarium in the cemetery. This idea, to go beyond a concept phase, must meet with the approval of the Diocese. Constructive suggestions for the long-term future of the cemetery are always welcome.

May the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace!