

# Understanding Annual Care Fees

Catholic Cemeteries of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Rockville Centre, Inc.



## WHAT IS CEMETERY CARE?

Cemetery Care refers to the maintenance of plots necessitated by natural growth and ordinary wear. Care includes the leveling, fertilizing, seeding, mowing, and general maintenance of the lawn area of a plot. In addition, Care includes the maintenance of cemetery trees, shrubs, roadways, and walks, provided there are sufficient cemetery funds for these purposes.

Catholic Cemeteries are a constant reminder that death is just a part of the journey that leads to new life. Catholic Cemeteries are sacred places that strive to create a religious environment conducive of prayer, reflection and remembrance. Cemetery Care funds are vital to maintaining beautiful, well-kept cemeteries that encourage prayerful visitation.



## TWO TYPES OF CARE - ANNUAL CARE VS PERMANENT MAINTENANCE

Grave holdings within the cemetery are under one of the following Care types:

1. **Annual Care:** For graves under Annual Care, a fee is due each and every year to cover the cost of general maintenance of the lawn area. This fee ranged from \$1 per grave in the early 1900's up to the current fee of \$25 annually per grave. Annual Care has not been offered as a care option for grave purchases in decades; however, plots purchased many years ago may remain under Annual Care.

*\* Graves in Cemetery of the Holy Rood and in parish cemeteries within the Diocese may be under Annual Care.*

2. **Permanent Maintenance:** For graves under Permanent Maintenance, a sum of money was allocated from the purchase of the Right of Burial/Inurnment and placed in a trust with Catholic Cemeteries for regular care and maintenance of the burial facilities. **No annual fees are due for care when a grave is under Permanent Maintenance.** Any new cemetery plots that are purchased from Catholic Cemeteries will be placed under Permanent Maintenance.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ANNUAL CARE FEES ARE NOT PAID?

In many instances, Annual Care fees have not been paid for decades, with some plots owing Annual Care fees dating back to 1933. While the cemetery continued to send annual bills and notices of unpaid Annual Care to plot holders, often these notices bounced back as undeliverable with no forwarding address provided.

When Annual Care fees are not up to date, the following restrictions apply to these plots:

- Before an interment may be permitted in the plot or an inscription may be placed on an existing monument, **all back Annual Care fees must be paid**
- Before a monument may be placed on a plot, the plot **must be converted to Permanent Maintenance**

## CONVERTING FROM ANNUAL CARE TO PERMANENT MAINTENANCE

If converting from Annual Care to Permanent Maintenance, back Annual Care fees must be paid (less the fee for the current year) in addition to a **Conversion Fee**. If there is a sizeable amount of back fees due, the Cemetery Director may authorize a reduction in annual care in order to put the grave under Permanent Maintenance.

Catholic Cemeteries highly recommends that families consider converting plots under Annual Care to Permanent Maintenance. In addition to eliminating future annual care fees, converting to Permanent Maintenance can provide a family comfort in knowing that the plot may be used in the future for interments (space permitting) with memorialization. For pricing on converting a plot to Permanent Maintenance, please speak to a cemetery representative.

**CATHOLIC CEMETERIES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE, INC.**

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