

DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

DIOCESAN CEMETERIES
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WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT ORDERING A MEMORIAL

- **ST. JOHN'S CEMETERY DOES NOT SELL MEMORIALS.**

Memorials are normally purchased from a memorial dealer chosen by the lot holder. If the memorial is an above ground monument, the cemetery pours the foundation and the charge for that is part of your bill from the memorial dealer. The cemetery controls foundations because it must be responsible for that foundation for all future years. The memorial dealer places the monument on your lot after the foundation is completed.

- **IF A LAWN LEVEL (FLAT) MARKER IS PURCHASED.**

There is no foundation required and the memorial dealer simply delivers the marker to the cemetery. The cemetery installation charge is included in the price you pay to the dealer for the marker.

- **ST. JOHN'S CEMETERY DOES NOT SOLICIT FAMILIES FOR THE PURCHASE OF MEMORIALS.**

If you are contacted by someone claiming he/she handled memorial purchases for St. John's Cemetery, you would be right to be suspicious and avoid doing business with them.

- **SHOULD YOU PLACE A MARKER OR MONUMENT.**

Whichever is applicable to your lot you should know that the cemetery has a set-up procedure for the protection of the lot holder, memorial dealer and the cemetery. **ON EVERY MEMORIAL ORDERED**, an application form must be signed by the purchaser, must be submitted by the memorial dealer to the cemetery describing the memorial exactly for approval. At the time the memorial is completed and delivered, it is inspected by cemetery personnel to make certain that it meets the application description.

- **THERE ARE RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING ALL MEMORIALS.**

The regulations are too extensive to print here but cover issues of size, material, finish and location. All memorial dealers have our regulations or if you have any questions, our office personnel will be happy to answer them for you as well.

- **THE REGULATIONS ARE REASONABLY FLEXIBLE.**

There are very few universal bans or requirements. The use of granite is a practical requirement due to their ability to withstand weather changes and their structural integrity. Certain other materials may be permitted in unusual situations but need to be approved by the cemetery before ordering.

- **WE DISCOURAGE ATTACHMENTS TO MEMORIALS.**

They are more often a problem than a benefit no matter how nice they look initially. Metals or composite materials have different expansion rates than granite and can cause cracking or staining of the granite memorial if oxidation occurs. They also can be broken off, vandalized or stolen which is the responsibility of the lot holder – not the cemetery.

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- **IF YOU ARE ERECTING A MONUMENT WITH A BASE.**

We strongly encourage that all or most of the base be in what is called a “rock finish”, which is generally less expensive than other finishes. The reason is that there is a great amount of mechanized maintenance in cemeteries, often in close proximity to a monument. If a monument is accidentally struck by equipment, rock finish shows no damage whereas other finishes would. The heart of a monument and most recognized is in the upper die stone.

- **MEMORIALS ARE PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNED BY EACH INDIVIDUAL,**

which is not insured under an individual’s policy. In case of vandalism, which is an unfortunate fact of life in our society, the cemetery will try to re-erect toppled stonework for the lot holder, but will not assume responsibility for any damage occurring to the stonework.

- **VANDALISM COULD INCREASE FOR FAMILIES ERECTING A MONUMENT**

more so than families placing flush mount grass markers. If your monument is a two piece monument, as most are, the top can be pushed off the base. Ask your memorial dealer about using epoxies developed by monument manufacturers to bond together the parts of the monument. They may have a slightly higher cost than simpler setting compounds, but they provide more security against vandalism damage.

- **LOT HOLDERS WHO HAVE PURCHASED A MEMORIAL,**

want to see it placed promptly. Sometimes placement is controlled by seasonal conditions. In the winter, the ground is frozen and it is impossible to place memorials properly and would have to be installed in the Spring. Our goal is to have all memorials in place by Memorial Day. Under normal weather conditions, a lot owner can expect a marker to be placed within ten days after delivery.

- **EVERY MEMORIAL IS A REMEMBRANCE OF TWO THINGS.**

First, it is a remembrance of a person very important to those who are placing the memorial. Second, it is a remembrance of the faith and beliefs that person lived by and the reasons for which brought that person to a Catholic cemetery for his/her burial. For these reasons, cemetery regulations require that the text or symbols on every memorial be done with dignity and reverence befitting both to the person and to the religious values that person believed in.

- **MEMORIALS ARE FOR THE LIVING AS MUCH AS FOR THE DEAD.**

They help the living honor those who were dear to them and tell a message of love and faith to all of the thousands who visit our cemeteries.