

# RESTING PLACE

FALL 2003

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE CATHOLIC CEMETERIES OF THE DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

## MEMORIAL MASSES COMMEMORATE LOVED ONES

The Diocese of Hamilton held its annual All Souls' Day Mass on November 2, 2003 at Our Lady of Victory Mausoleum in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. Despite the rainy weather, the Mass attracted approximately 3,000 people, many of whom watched the proceedings on closed circuit television in the side chapels. Bishop Anthony Tonnos celebrated the Mass and refreshments were served following the ceremony.

"The All Souls' Day Mass is a day when Catholics are invited to pray for their loved ones and ancestors," says Catholic Cemeteries managing director John O'Brien. "It's a day when we ensure those who have gone before us are not forgotten."

**Memorial Masses are held at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in the main chapel of Our Lady of Victory Mausoleum to commemorate those who have been buried or entombed at a Catholic cemetery within the last month. These Masses are held at 4:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month and families will receive a written invitation.**

**Outdoor Masses are held in late spring and early fall at the Catholic cemeteries in Guelph, Brantford and the greater Hamilton/Burlington area. Information is posted in parish bulletins or available by calling The Catholic Cemeteries office at 905-522-7727.**



## MESSAGE from the Managing Director

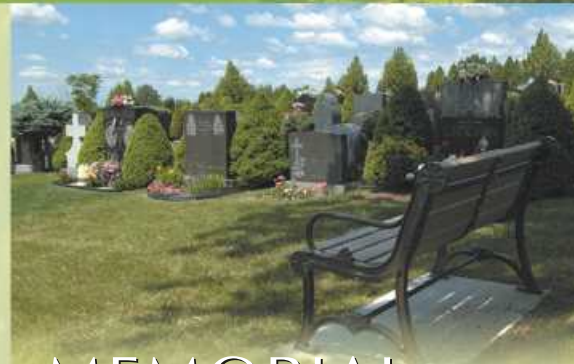
Welcome to the first issue of our new publication. *Resting Place* will be published twice each year, in fall and spring, and will provide news and information about The Catholic Cemeteries of the Diocese of Hamilton.

In addition to *Resting Place*, we are also producing a new poster and brochure, to be available in local parishes, and a detailed web site ([www.thecatholiccemeteries.ca](http://www.thecatholiccemeteries.ca)). Focus group research conducted this past spring revealed that the Catholic community has questions about our services and who can use the Catholic cemeteries. As a result, we've been working over the last few months to develop new and different ways to increase awareness of services offered by The Catholic Cemeteries.

The Diocese of Hamilton encourages all baptized Catholics to choose a Catholic cemetery. Occasionally, a Catholic who has been away from the Church wonders if Catholic burial is possible. The answer is yes. We also believe that families should stay together in death as in life, and so we welcome the family members of any baptized Catholic, whether or not those family members are also Catholic.

The Catholic Cemeteries of the Diocese of Hamilton is proud to serve you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or comments about our services please don't hesitate to call our office at 905-522-7727.

**John J. O'Brien**



## MEMORIAL Trees and Benches Provide New Options

Providing a bench for quiet reflection or adding to the beauty of a cemetery with a tree are new options for families looking for ways to memorialize their loved ones beyond the traditional monument or grave marker.

"Having a tree planted or a bench placed with an inscribed plaque provides another tangible way for families to honour the memory of their deceased loved one," says Catherine Van Gemert of The Catholic Cemeteries. "Both benches and trees contribute a sense of serenity to the cemeteries."

### **Bench options include:**

- Redwood-finish slat construction with cast iron supports and a 9"x3" bronze plaque with inscription
- Granite with a 9"x3" plaque with inscription

### **Tree options include:**

- Red oak
- White oak
- White pine
- Red maple
- An existing cemetery tree

Memorial trees have an 8"x6" bronze plaque with inscription placed at the base of the tree.

Both memorial trees and benches are placed as close to the gravesite as possible.

For more information, including prices, please contact Catherine Van Gemert at The Catholic Cemeteries, 905-522-7727.

# THE CHANGING FACE OF CEMETERIES

## *From Formal to Natural Landscaping*

A 10-acre section of Gate of Heaven Cemetery in Burlington is the test site for a new style of cemetery landscaping that incorporates native wildflowers and grasses.

Thousands of seedlings were planted in 2001 and are slowly gaining a foothold, says cemeteries' ecologist Paul O'Hara. "There's not too much to see there yet, but next year we'll have quite a show of flowers as the plants mature."

Flowers such as wild bergamot, black-eyed Susan, butterfly milkweed, asters and goldenrod, and grasses such as big bluestem, switch grass, and fox sedge are native to the Hamilton area and planting them just makes good sense, Mr. O'Hara says. "Native grasslands, or 'prairies' provide habitat for wildlife. We're preserving important native species and because these plants are native to our area, they can get by with less water and pesticide use."

Mr. O'Hara, formerly with Royal Botanical Gardens, even has a "nursery" in one corner of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery where he grows native plants for the primary purpose of harvesting their seeds – seeds that are then sowed into cemetery gardens.

Managing director John O'Brien says the native plant project is part of The Catholic Cemeteries' role as environmental stewards. "We own large parcels of land and we see it as our duty to use that land wisely. Our natural landscaping program is simply an extension of that."

The native plant project is part of an overall trend to a more natural landscaping style that's affecting both private and public gardens. Formal hedges and structured flower beds are giving way to a less studied look. "We will always have some formal areas in our cemeteries, but you'll see softer areas too, such as huge drifts of trilliums planted in shady areas," Mr. O'Brien says.

## DIOCESE OPENS HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CREMATION CENTRE

The Diocese of Hamilton has opened its first crematorium – Holy Cross Catholic Cremation Centre – located at Holy Cross Cemetery in Brant County.

Cremation services are available to Catholics as well as to people of other faiths and cultures. For people who choose cremation, The Catholic Cemeteries can provide the necessary coordination with the church and funeral home and also provide several options for the interment of cremated remains.

In 1963 the Catholic Church lifted its prohibition against cremation. According to our faith, the cremated body must be treated with the same respect of any human remains, and buried in consecrated ground or entombed in specially designed niches within a mausoleum or columbarium. The scattering of cremated remains, dividing them among family members, keeping them at home or in any other non-consecrated area is contrary to the practice of sacred respect.

For more information about cremation services, or to make pre-need arrangements for cremation, please call the main office at 905-522-7727.

## WREATH REMINDER

Have you placed your winter wreath?

Wreaths are available from The Catholic Cemeteries and may be placed at gravesites from October 1 to April 1.

Families may purchase a wreath and have it placed by cemetery staff by simply calling the main office at 905-522-7727. Credit card orders can be taken over the phone at any cemetery office. Please note that families are responsible for removing their wreaths by April 1 to allow for spring clean up.

## *History of* ALL SOULS' DAY

All Souls' Day, also known in some countries as "The Day of the Dead," is an official feast day on the Catholic calendar and is always celebrated on November 2, following All Saints' Day.

The day owes its origins to both pre-Hispanic Aztec traditions and pre-Christian Celtic ritual practice that honoured the end of summer and commemorated the dead in a festival known as Samhain (pronounced Sew-in). In Celtic belief, the spirits of the dead were supposed to visit their kinsmen in search of warmth and good cheer as winter approached.

By the end of the Middle Ages, the celebration of Allhallow's Eve, followed by the Feast of All Saints on November 1, was an established part of the calendar of the Roman Catholic Church.

In 998, St. Odilo, abbot of the powerful monastery of Cluny in France, added a celebration on November 2 - a day of prayer for the souls of all the departed faithful.

The Catholic Cemeteries of the Diocese of Hamilton has hosted All Souls' Day Masses for more than 60 years.

## CONTACT US



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