

General Rules of the Parish Cemetery

St. Peter Parish

St. Charles, Missouri

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The purpose of the rules of St. Peter Parish Cemetery is to promote the ideals of Catholic Christian Burial and the continuing welfare and the well-being of those possessing the Right of Sepulcher and visitors.

General Rules

1. St. Peter Parish cemetery is operated for the religious and charitable purposes of the Catholic Church through the burial and memorializing of the faithful departed.
2. The Sacred Canons of the Roman Catholic Church, the Norms of the Archdiocese of St. Louis and the policies set forth by the St. Peter Parish Cemetery Board govern in all cases.
3. These rules are subject to change as circumstances warrant. Changes in and amendments to these rules are to be made by the majority of the Cemetery Board, with the approval of the pastor.
4. The new rules become effective upon proper distribution and publication of such changes. Proper distribution and publication of the amendments and changes are made either through the parish bulletin, parish websites (**STPSTC.ORG**), or through publication through auspices of St. Peter Parish. The new rules become effective upon dates indicated with these changes at the time of their publication.
5. Those wishing to be buried in the St Peter Parish Cemetery must have a connection to the Catholic faith or someone buried in the cemetery. The Cemetery Board reserves the right to give final approval for those requesting burial.
6. No signs or notices are to be posted in the Parish Cemetery without expressed written permission of the Parish Cemetery Board.
7. Concrete or metal vaults are recommended for all burials in St. Peter Cemetery.

God's Acres

1. The St. Peter Parish Cemetery is a sacred place and due all the honor and respect given to a church.
2. Unbecoming behavior, dress and language are not permitted within the Parish Cemetery grounds. Loitering and boisterous demonstrations or improper gatherings are not permitted within the Parish Cemetery grounds.
3. No food, drink, or eating is permitted in the Parish Cemetery
4. No alcoholic beverages are permitted in the Parish Cemetery.
5. The possession and use of firearms is not permitted in the Parish Cemetery. (Allowed exceptions to this are limited to Military, Para-Military Organizations or Law Enforcement Officials who make use of firearms in performance of their duties at the time of burial or at regularly scheduled Memorial Services.)
6. Pets are not allowed in the Parish Cemetery
7. Visitation hours to the Parish Cemetery are from sunrise to sunset year around.
8. The Parish Cemetery Board reserves the right to refuse admission to, or the use of its facilities at any time, to any person, or persons, as its rules, judgement and traditions may dictate.

Right of Sepulcher

All arrangements for burial plot(s) must be made through the parish office. Payments must be made at the time arrangements are made. When a person has made arrangements for a burial plot, either for immediate or anticipated burial, either for self or for the family member(s), they now retain the Right of Sepulcher for those grave plot(s) alone.

At the time arrangements are made, a Certificate for the Right of Sepulcher will be issued to the holder specifying the section, row, and grave plot(s) for which they hold the Right of Sepulcher. Lot locations may be shown by appointment if desired.

The Right of Sepulcher in the Rules for Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of St. Louis is defined as **the legal authority to order an interment in a particular burial place**. The St. Peter Parish Cemetery Board agrees only to the right to have a burial in the designated grave plot, and nothing more.

Those for whom certain grave plot(s) are reserved in St. Peter Parish Cemetery may **not** transfer the Right of Sepulcher for the lot(s) to anyone other than St. Peter Parish without prior written approval of the Cemetery Board.

1. In the event a person who has a grave plot reserved in St. Peter Parish Cemetery wishes to return that plot or plots to the Parish, the Parish Cemetery Board will consider this request.
2. If the reserved section included more than one grave plot, the unused section may be returned, provided that they are not part of a family grave plot that is partially used and remaining lots are not separated by existing graves. Crypts, lots and portions thereof may not be transferred by a private party to anyone other than the Cemetery, provided, however, that the Cemetery is not obligated to accept the same. The Cemetery will refund the original purchase price, if possible, prorated for the portion returned. A change of record fee will be deducted from the purchase price returned. Occupied burial space or unused graves isolated by the burial of family members or a monument may not be returned. Such graves may be donated for charity burials.
3. Those who have excess burial plots, and have no particular likelihood of their use, are encouraged to return the Right of Sepulcher to St. Peter Parish
4. The disinterment of the dead is both against the Public Policy and the Canons of the Catholic Church. It will be allowed only for the most pressing reasons upon written consent of the Cemetery Board. A fee for disinterment will be assessed for the damage and the disruption to the Parish. This fee will be in line with that charged by St. Peter Cemetery.
5. If seventy-five years has elapsed since a lot which was reserved for burial by a family in St. Peter Parish Cemetery has had no recorded activity in that lot (or lots), then they shall revert to St. Peter Parish, provided, however the Parish Cemetery Board has made a reasonable and diligent search for the claimants to these lots.
6. It is also possible for the cremated remains of the individual to be interred in a grave where another individual has already been buried. Since the cremated remains are small and need not be buried deeply, these can be interred in an already used grave. Those who hold the Right of Sepulcher need to grant consent for this arrangement before such an interment may be done. See: **Cremation Grave Sites** for alternative cremation burial options.

7. St. Peter Parish Cemetery also provides a special “angel” area for the burial of infants and young children. The plot size is 24” X 24” and 24” deep. It is the responsibility of the family to arrange for burial in this section.
8. A single plot may accommodate a maximum of two (2) caskets. The use of a double burial method is used. Additional costs apply for each casket.
9. A single plot may accommodate up to three (3) cremated remains and one casket.

Cremation Grave sites

1. St. Peter Cemetery has available grave sites for cremated remains. These sites are somewhat smaller than the normal graves and offered at a substantially reduced price as well as reduced cost for grave opening/closing.
2. A cremation grave allows for two in-ground burial of cremated remains. Full-size graves can also be used for the burial of cremated remains, allowing up to three (3) cremated remains per grave (additional right of burial fees apply). The same planting and decoration restrictions that apply to full-size graves apply to cremation graves.
3. This designated location is in the oldest part of the cemetery, located to the left of the entrance drive on Eighth Street.

Funerals

All funerals processions, upon reaching the cemetery, come under the jurisdiction of the cemetery management. It is the responsibility of the Funeral Director to arrive at the correct gravesite. Parking, routing, traffic direction, gravesite services and all other funeral and interment arrangements within the cemetery boundaries are under the exclusive jurisdiction of the cemetery management. In addition, the following will apply:

1. Funerals taken graveside must have pallbearers.
2. If the Cemetery erred, it reserves the right to correct its error at its cost and no further liability to any other party.
3. If the error resulted from the order or action of a Funeral Director, monument dealer, or other party, the cost of rectifying the error and all other liability will be that of the one who caused the error, with no liability upon the part of the cemetery.
4. If the lot holder was in error, he (she) bears the full responsibility with no liability upon the part of the Cemetery.
5. If another person orders the erroneous interment through error or deceit, he (she) must bear full responsibility with no liability upon the part of the cemetery to verify the justification of the claim made.
6. After a new interment, please be patient while the grave is filled, seeded and the grass is established.

General Condition of the Cemetery

The grade of all lots, graves, roads, fences, or other features of the Cemetery shall be determined by the St. Peter Parish Cemetery Board and the guidelines may be altered when deemed necessary. All

work on lots and graves (setting of foundations, grass cutting, filling graves, planting, etc.) shall be done in accord with the policies established by the Parish Cemetery Board. The Parish Cemetery Board reserves the right to contract all services done in the Cemetery.

Aisles, walks, roads, and other areas may be converted to burial grounds as determined by the St. Peter Parish Cemetery Board.

Maintenance and repair of all memorial work on a lot shall be the responsibility of the holder of the Right of Sepulcher and is not part of care provided by the Parish.

Monuments and Markers

Definitions:

Monuments: a large, freestanding upright memorial as a memorial for a **family plot**.

Family plot: a group of not less than 6 graves adjacent to one another.

Marker/headstone/tombstone : a small memorial for one or more graves. Included in this definition are lawn-level markers set flush with the level of the ground and small, freestanding stone memorials (a.k.a. slant or raised markers).

Before any monument or marker may be installed, approval from the Parish Board must be obtained. The approval must be granted for design, size and materials. The approval must be in writing. **It is suggested that the family request approval prior to ordering monuments or markers/headstones/tombstones to be sure it meets the specifications.**

Approval requests should be sent via E-mail to: cemeteryboard@stpstc.org Failure to get approval prior to installation may result in the removal or modification to the monument in order to make it comply.

Monuments and markers erected by those holding the Right of Sepulcher on the graves for which they hold the Right of Sepulcher are expected to be in accord with the Catholic character of the Parish Cemetery. Symbols, verses and quotations used on the monuments and markers must be of a Catholic religious nature.

1. Should the Parish Cemetery Board determine, at the time of such consultation, that the proposed design is inappropriate or incompatible with the Catholic religious nature of St. Peter Parish Cemetery, the Parish Cemetery Board can insist on the necessary changes. Cemetery Board may also refuse to allow the erection until the necessary changes have been completed.
2. If the Parish Cemetery Board determines that any monument, memorial, effigy, or other structure on any lot is in violation of the provisions of these rules, the Cemetery Board shall have the authority to remove any such offending structure. This shall only be done after notice is given to those who hold the Right of Sepulcher for that lot (or lots) concerning the violation. Failure of the owner to cure any such violations, within 90 days, will result in the removal of the offending structures and the holders of the plot(s) shall be responsible to pay the Parish for the cost of such removal and cure.
3. All foundations for memorial work will be installed according to specifications determined by the Parish Cemetery Board. The Parish Cemetery board will provide specifications to those holding the Right of Sepulcher or contractors engaged by those holding the Right of Sepulcher upon request.

4. Neither the Parish Cemetery, nor any of its representatives, shall be responsible in any way for any work done on individual lots, once those holding the Right of Sepulcher have used the lots. Any movable memorials, flower containers, decorations or other items placed on the lots are responsibility of the holders of the Right of Sepulcher for those plots only. The person erecting the monuments or memorials on the lots shall be responsible for the workmanship of the monuments, and shall see to it that the work is done in a workmanlike, high quality manner
5. St. Peter Parish Cemetery Board encourage families to install grave markers for all deceased interred in St. Peter Parish Cemetery. Normally, a short time after a burial, a temporary grave marker is placed by the funeral home on the grave. These are temporary and only meant for use until the time a permanent marker can be erected. It is expected that these temporary markers should not be used permanently and should be replaced by a permanent marker between six to twelve months following the burial.
6. All markers should be of a Catholic character. The Parish Cemetery Board thus reserves the right at all times to prescribe the kind, design, size, symbolism, craftsmanship, quality, and material of all memorials, inscriptions, plaques, monuments placed in the Parish Cemetery. Monuments shall be centered on the back line of the grave lot.
7. Footings for the monuments can extend to the edge of the grave plot, but not beyond that edge.
8. Only one marker shall be allowed on each lot. Such a marker should not be closer than 3 inches to the edge of the grave plot.
9. Only one marker shall be allowed on double (multiple) lots. Such a marker should not be closer than 3 inches to the edge of the grave plot. This option is only available when these grave lots are immediately adjacent to one another.
12. Memorial benches are not an acceptable alternative in place of the traditional monument.
13. Where appropriate, additional markers shall be allowed on lots honoring United States Military Veterans. The markers should be installed flush with the ground level, at the foot of the grave, to facilitate ease of ground maintenance. Where possible, veteran's plaques should be placed on the backside of the monument.
14. **Materials:** All monuments and markers/headstones/tombstones must be made of real bronze, glazed granite, or permanent materials acceptable to the Cemetery Board. They shall **not** be made of wood, sandstone, or other materials which is susceptible to decay.

Monument Regulations

Cement Base: All monuments shall have a stone or cement base, level with the ground, extending outward from the outer perimeter of the base of the headstones, or markers shall be six (6) inches on all sides, with a minimum of four (4) inches.

Monument size: The Parish Cemetery board will provide specifications to those holding the Right of Sepulcher or contractors engaged by those holding the Right of Sepulcher upon request.

Placement of Monument: Must be in the center of the group of graves in the plot and at the back line of graves.

Marker/Headstone/Tombstone Regulations

Cement Base: All headstones, tombstones, or markers shall have a stone or cement base, level with the ground, extending outward from the outer perimeter of the base of the headstones, or markers shall be six (6) inches on all sides, with a minimum of four (4) inches.

Specifications for Raised Markers: The width of a single headstone, tombstone, or marker shall not exceed twenty-four (**24**) inches, not including the base. The width of a raised double headstone, tombstone, or marker shall not exceed forty-two (**42**) inches, not including the base. The height of a single or double raised headstone, tombstone, or marker shall not exceed forty-two (**42**) inches above the ground. Only one family marker shall be allowed for each eight (8) plots. Family markers must be aligned within the general alignment of raised markers.

Specifications for Flat Markers: Flat markers shall not be smaller in surface measurement than twelve (12) inches by eighteen (18) inches, not including the base and not larger than twenty-one (21) inches by forty-two (42) inches, not including the base.

Materials: All headstones, tombstones, or markers must be made of real bronze, glazed granite, or permanent materials acceptable to the Cemetery Board. They shall **not** be made of wood, sandstone, or other materials which is susceptible to decay.

Monument Dealers and Contractors

Any contractors hired by lot owners or users to perform services on lots in the Parish Cemetery are and shall be bound by the provisions of the General Rules of the Parish Cemetery of St. Peter Parish.

1. The contractors shall perform their services in a workmanlike manner. The contractors shall remove all litter and signs of their work, other than the actual work they have done from the lot at the conclusion of their work. The Parish Cemetery grounds shall be left in equal or better condition upon the completion of work than they were previously.
2. After the contractor have refilled the grave, they shall immediately remove any excess dirt from the site.
3. The contractor shall be responsible for refilling the grave and bringing it up to grade with the area immediately surrounding the lot.
4. If, after notice is given to the owners and contractors, that settling has occurred the owners or contractors do not refill the specific grave lot to the satisfaction of the Parish Cemetery Board, they may then hire the work to be done, and if it becomes necessary, then both the holder of the Right of Sepulcher and the contractor shall be liable to the Parish Cemetery Board, in equal parts, to reimburse the Parish for any expenses including labor, materials, and equipment rentals, if necessary. The Parish Cemetery Board reserves the right to pursue any legal remedies necessary to enforce this provision.
5. All contractors seeking to perform services and erection of memorials, shall contact the Parish Cemetery Board at cemeteryboard@stpstc.org Such contact will be provided by giving to the Parish

Office their full names, business address, business telephone, and appropriate proof of insurance coverage.

6. The Parish Cemetery Board reserves the right to determine the location of a memorial on a lot.
7. All contactor work should be done Monday through Saturday. Work on Sunday should be avoided, but if necessary, must be approved in advance by the cemetery board.

In the event of an error on the part of the Parish Cemetery Board, it has no other liability than to correct its error at the expense of the parish.

The Parish Cemetery Board, the Archdiocese of St. Louis, the Parish of St. Peter (St. Charles), and their agents, employees, servants or any others acting on their behalf, shall not be liable to holders of the Right of Sepulcher/users of the lots in the Parish Cemetery, or to third persons for injury resulting from the use of the Parish Cemetery lots, unless such injury was due to willful fault on the part of the Archdiocese, St. Peter Parish, the Parish Cemetery Board and/or their agents, employees, servants or any others acting on their behalf.

Plantings and Decorations

The intention of the Parish Cemetery Board, acting at the behest of St. Peter Parish, is to provide beautiful grounds for the Parish Cemetery out of reverence and respect for those interred there and their families. With that in mind, the following rules are enforced to govern the general appearance and upkeep of the Parish Cemetery.

No growing plants, trees, flowers or any other flora shall be planted or permanently placed on any burial lots in the Parish Cemetery. The Parish Cemetery Board shall be the sole arbiter of what plantings to install and where to install them on the Parish Cemetery grounds. Some reasons for this are:

1. The holder of the Right of Sepulcher has only the area of the grave plot, which is typically 4 foot by 10 foot per grave. Any plantings of this sort would intrude upon other graves.
2. Such plantings make it more difficult for the parish maintenance staff to keep the Parish Cemetery in good condition. These are additional items to maintain.
3. The Parish Cemetery Board reserves the right to revise and add to these reasons at its discretion. Glass, plastic and ceramic vases, flowerpots, and containers, etc., are not allowed in the Parish Cemetery. Since these are readily subject to breakage, they create a potential hazard to maintenance staff and visitors.

Metal and stone permanent flower vases, which are designed and constructed for outdoor use, may be erected on lots. These must be wholly within the area defined by the Right of Sepulcher for a given plot. The lot holder /user shall be responsible for the maintenance of such containers and the Cemetery Board is not responsible for any damage caused to any such containers or the theft of such containers. Such containers shall be placed so they do not encroach on the common areas between the lots, and so they do not interfere with pedestrian traffic or the ability of the maintenance staff to mow and maintain the Parish Cemetery. The best location for flowers vases of this sort is when they are erected as part of the grave marker.

1. Votive candles and memorial candles, because of their potential fire hazard and instability, are not permitted anywhere within the Parish Cemetery.
2. Anything deemed inappropriate by the parish cemetery staff will be removed immediately. The following are examples: wilted or faded flowers, freestanding statuary, extraneous items, votive or solar lights, shepherd hooks, potted plants, wind chimes, pinwheels, bird houses, balloons, and holiday figurines.
3. Both natural and artificial flowers are permitted, but these will be removed from the cemetery by the maintenance staff at such time they deteriorate, die, or become worn or faded. This will be done as part of the annual Parish Cemetery clean ups, and at other times when circumstances warrant such removals.
4. Christmas wreaths or particular Christmas decorations are acceptable within the confines of the designated grave when placed by the holder or family of those holding the Right of grave plots from December through February.
5. The placements of the American Flag or other patriotic insignia of temporary sort is allowed on the individual grave plots, which are located in the immediate contact with the grave markers to allow the maintenance staff the opportunity to keep up the beauty and respect for the flag of the United States is expected on the placements of these patriotic memorials.
6. Materials that are not biodegradable, i.e., foam, plastic packing, Styrofoam, etc., hamper efforts to establish an attractive lawn. These materials are not permitted in the Parish Cemetery.
7. St. Peter Parish and its Parish Cemetery Board are not responsible for any particular family grave decorations that are lost, damaged or stolen, etc.
8. The custom of placing cut flowers on the graves of the newly buried is honored and respected by St. Peter Parish Cemetery.
9. The family at their discretion can remove these. The maintenance staff will remove these when they have deteriorated to the point they become a detriment to the overall appearance of the Parish Cemetery.
10. The maintenance staff will conduct periodic cleanings of the Parish Cemetery. Notifications will be provided through the St. Peter Parish bulletin concerning when the cleanings will be held so the families have the opportunity to clear the individual grave plots beforehand and preserve their individual decorations.
11. The Parish Cemetery Board reserves the right to remove all decorations, memorials, etc., that are not accord with the Catholic religious nature of St. Peter Parish cemetery as specified in these guidelines, or when they have become dangerous and/ or detrimental to the overall appearance of the Parish Cemetery.

Decorations Removal and Cemetery Cleaning

Parish members will remove all floral decorations that have not been removed. Cemetery cleaning will take place three (3) times a year. The first will be at the end of February by which time all Christmas décor must be removed. The second will take place at the end of August. The final cleaning will be at the end of November. New decorations for the next season may be placed on the grave one week following the previous cleaning date.