**St. John Cemetery Decoration Policy**

St. John Cemetery is a Catholic Cemetery sacredly devoted to the respectful burial and memory of our loved ones. To maintain this atmosphere, The St. John Cemetery Board of Directors & Cemetery staff has the authority to remove inappropriate or offensive items without notice and dispose of them without recourse.

 St. John Cemetery will not accept responsibility for damage or loss of any decorations or items placed on a grave or anywhere on Cemetery property. The Cemetery recommends that no items of large dollar or sentimental value be placed at graves due to the volume of unmonitored traffic through the Cemetery.

The following Decoration Regulations have been designed to find a balance between the emotional needs of families and the guiding principles of providing well maintained grounds for visitors and staff.

The Decorating area for a grave(s) is the 3 inches immediately in front of the monument and equal to or less than the monument width. All allowed decorations must be located in this area or on the monument.

One (1) single-pole shepherd staff with one (1) hanger, per grave, between the heights of 36 to 48 inches, for the purpose of holding a flower arrangement, basket or wreath only. This must be placed at the side or in front of the monument. Any other pole or metal device needs cemetery office approval. For a $5 fee a member of the cemetery staff will drill a hole into the cement footing for placement of another pole or metal device.

Small memorial items are allowed only if they are attached onto the monument base and do not extend beyond the plane of the monument. Glass, ceramic, rock or wire items are not allowed. Items may not be placed anywhere on the ground. Items found on the ground are subject to disposal. The only exception to this is: US Flags no larger than 12” x 18”, on an a wooden dowel 24 inches in height or less, are allowed in the decorating area. Any US Flag that appears in a dishonorable condition will be removed for proper disposal.

The following items are allowed in permanent vases only:

 Small plastic gazing balls, solar lights, pinwheels

The following items are NEVER allowed:

 Banners Bird Houses Eternal Flames Wind Chimes

 Candles Gazing Balls Grave Blankets Christmas Trees

 Windsocks Balloons Objects made of glass, ceramic, tin & wire construction

In keeping with Catholic Cemetery values:

Goblins, ghosts, skeletons, zombies and other similar Halloween decorations are not allowed.

**Three weeks following Memorial Day, all decorations that do not sit on the cement footings or on the monument itself need to be removed. All grave decorations need to be removed by the end of October. Christmas decorations are permitted after Thanksgiving but must be removed by April 1.**

No flowers, bushes, shrubs or trees can be planted on any Cemetery grave plot.

(over)

Artificial flowers and arrangements are allowed, but must be in: A) a plastic or metal spiked vase or planter within the 3 inch decorating area guidelines; B) in permanent vases; or C) as a saddle on the monuments itself. The Cemetery reserves the right to dispose of any flowers (natural or artificial) and/or grave decorations when they become unsightly.

For clarification on these Cemetery Regulations one can speak to the 2 (two) Cemetery Trustees: Don Shonka or Jim Schmitz, or to Father David Beckman.

**The St. John Cemetery Board of Directors has directed that these regulations be enforced on a regular and consistent basis. As of April 1, 2020, all non-conforming decorations are subject to removal and disposal. Please remove these items to avoid their loss as soon as possible.**

**Please call Jim Schmitz at 319-327- 4805 or stop at the Cemetery Office if you have any questions. Many non-conforming items have not been removed in the past due to limited enforcement. This does not justify their presence and they can be removed by cemetery staff.**

**These policies will be enforced for the safety of all.**