

## THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS AND CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

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As Catholics, we believe that the Church is a “Communion of Saints.”

“We believe in the communion of all the faithful of Christ, those who are pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven, all together forming one Church; and we believe that in this communion, the merciful love of God and his saints is always attentive to our prayers” (Paul VI, CPG 30). (CCC 962)

We are Catholic today because of the beliefs and traditions that have been passed from one generation to the next for almost two thousand years. It reinforces our belief in the Communion of Saints because we can trace our roots directly to the teachings of Jesus Christ through the succession of Popes since Peter, and all of the faithful who have been a part of the Catholic faith from that time until the present day.

Catholic Cemeteries are a very important part of our belief in the Communion of Saints. The Ten Commandments were given to Moses as an integral part of the Covenant between God and his Chosen People. One of those Commandments was to “Honor Your Father And Your Mother.” The Commandment does not specify to honor them while they are alive. A walk through any Catholic Cemetery is, as it should be, a kind of a Family reunion with all of the Members of God’s family who share our beliefs that have gone before us. If we truly believe in the Communion of Saints, then Catholic Cemeteries are a means to “honor” those who have completed the journey of Faith unto Life, Hope unto Death, Love unto Eternal Life. It is our responsibility to make sure that they are given a final resting place that is fitting for this honoring to take place.

“In full consciousness of this communion of the whole Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the Church in its pilgrim members, from the very earliest days of the Christian Religion, has honored with great respect the memory of the dead; and ‘because it is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins’ she offers her suffrages for them.” Our prayer for them is capable not only of helping them, but also of making their intercession for us effective. (CCC 958)