

A Cemetery for St. Vladimir's Parish?



Information Update and Questionnaire Compiled by the Parish Building Team, January 1, 2008

Proposal Abstract

The St. Vladimir Building Team proposes to make available approximately 2 acres of currently owned land and to sell burial rights to our own parishioners

Background

During the year 2006 the St. Vladimir Building Team drew up an ambitious plan to develop a portion of currently owned land for a diocesan cemetery to raise money to construct a larger church, fund a full time Rector, and purchase neighboring properties adjacent to current church grounds.

In June of 2007, the Parish Council authorized the Building Team to undertake a feasibility study for a full blown diocesan cemetery and report back to the parish. In August, the team held a progress report meeting for the entire parish. Based on parish feedback, the Building Team redesigned its initial proposal, limiting the size and scope of the venture as stated in the Abstract above.

Perspectives from the Rector

Over the past several years, I have spoken informally with several parishioners about a cemetery for our church. You are undoubtedly aware that Orthodox communities of all types and sizes all over the world have built cemeteries for their parishioners, and my limited discussions have revealed several of our own families who are interested in this service. Even without a formal poll of opinions, I am aware of seven families would like to purchase burial rights to more than 14 grave sites. There are several reasons why it is a good idea to be buried in an Orthodox cemetery from a spiritual point of view and I have outlined these in the enclosed pamphlet,

“Orthodox Christian Burial”, which I encourage you to read, since the question of where to be buried is above all a spiritual question.

Questions and Answers:

1. How much would St. Vladimir gravesites cost, that is, to purchase burial rights to a single grave? *Answer: \$1500*

2. How would the total cost of St. Vladimir burials compare with, say, Forest Hill or Holy Trinity Monastery Cemetery? *Forrest Hill Cost: \$1000, Holy Trinity Monastery Cost: \$1500*

3. What are the advantages of an Orthodox burial vs. a non-sectarian burial? *Fr. Gregory has suggested several advantages and we urge you to familiarize yourself with the pamphlet “Orthodox Christian Burial”, which you can also find posted prominently on our web site.*

4. Can cremains/ashes be buried in an Orthodox cemetery? *No.*

5. If I donate organs etc. prior to my interment, can my remains be buried in an Orthodox cemetery? *Yes.*

6. Can a non-Orthodox family member be buried in a St. Vladimir cemetery? *Yes and no. We anticipate that a section of the cemetery might be reserved for married couples, only one of whom is Orthodox. Bishop Peter has instructed us that only those spouses that are eligible for Church Marriage may be buried in the cemetery. Other non-Orthodox family members: no. Please contact Fr. Gregory for more information in this regard.*

7. Does the parish have a master plan for the proposed cemetery? *Yes. Two years ago, the Building Team commissioned detailed site plans for the entire church property. The present proposal is utilizing these plans, not as a blueprint but as a draft. No action has been taken on this draft by the Parish Council.*

8. Does Bishop Peter endorse a cemetery for St. Vladimir’s? *Yes. On several occasions, the Bishop has suggested that a cemetery here might serve the entire diocese, but such expansion is beyond the scope of the present proposal.*

9. If I fill out a questionnaire (see insert), will I have to pay anything? *No. The questionnaire is only intended to provide guidance to the Parish Council in further planning.*

10. Has the Parish Council endorsed the development of a parish cemetery? *No. The questionnaire insert will be submitted soon to the Rector, then later to the Parish Council. Your questionnaire is important! Please fill it out now and place it in the Kiosk basket or mail to the parish at your earliest convenience. Thank you!*