

Holy Sepulchre Cemetery

Establishment of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery was considered by the Most Rev. Bernard J. McQuaid as his outstanding achievement.

Everyone knows that this city of the dead in Charlotte Boulevard is one of the noted institutions of the Diocese of Rochester—sacred acres of appealing beauty comprising hallowed ground where sleep loved ones from many thousands of Catholic families.

Not so many are aware that creation of this cemetery was fought bitterly; that its formation united all of the Catholic Churches of the City of Rochester into an indissoluble union, ending forever the differences of race which had previously separated them into factions.

Bishop McQuaid went ahead with his negotiations, purchasing 110 acres of land lying on both sides of the present boulevard midway between Rochester and Charlotte; level acres, with the west bank of the Genesee River the only change in a single topographical pattern.

The Cemetery was laid out with practiced landscape artistry, enhancing the natural beauty of trees and a small lake with evergreens, shrubs, and flowers. The Cemetery was opened to burials in 1871. The construction of a fine Gothic stone chapel 70x30 feet, near the entrance, made it complete for service. The original grounds were opened on East Side of Charlotte Boulevard, and an imposing entrance of two Gothic buildings was constructed. These buildings at the present day are considered among the finest type of Gothic architecture in the country. Old prejudices melted away as members of all nationalities took increasing pride in the sacredness and beauty of the place where all entered eternity on common ground.

Sixteen years later, Bishop McQuaid, with keen foresight, purchased one hundred fifty additional acres of land on the West Side of the Boulevard, which was gradually developed into burial grounds, with a section of same reserved for nursery propagation and greenhouse; the erection of buildings for superintendent's use; tenant house, and stables. At the time of Bishop McQuaid's death, February 18, 1909, there were approximately 34,000 interments in the Cemetery.

The Right Reverend Thomas F. Hickey, second bishop of Rochester, as President of the Board of Trustees of Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, continued the excellent work of his predecessor and several pieces of property, adjoining the original acreage, were purchased by him. The further development of the East Side was carried out by Bishop Hickey.

As the South Division became filled, a new development known as the North Division was opened to single and double graves and later sections were opened containing lots. On April 1, 1923, the adoption of the Perpetual Care provision was placed on all lots and graves sold in the Cemetery. With this development modern regulations were adopted restricting the sizes of small markers on graves. The construction of a complete new unit of greenhouses; modern stable and utility building; a new tenant house; an office and rest room building at the entrance on West Side of boulevard was completed during Bishop Hickey's term of office as President.

During the term of office of Most Reverend John Francis

O'Hern, third Bishop of Rochester from 1929 to 1933, the entire Cemetery grounds were placed under the provision of particular care. This provision enhanced the appearance of the grounds, and while this operation is costly, the Trustees of the Cemetery continue this care to the present writing. A new and beautiful plot of ground on the East Side of the Cemetery was dedicated to the various communities of nuns of the city. Under the direction of Bishop

The Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith

One hundred and twenty years ago a French girl, enthralled by the stories her brother, a seminarian, narrated of the missionaries in America, vowed to do her "bit" to relieve the hardships of these Christian pioneers. She conceived the idea of collecting a penny a week from the workers in the silk mills of Lyons for the American missions. One hundred years later, the humble scheme which Pauline Jaricot had inaugurated was adopted as the working plan of the Pontifical Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the international mission-aid Society of the Catholic Church.

We in America owe an immense debt of gratitude to this Society for the material assistance which it provided in the early days of our country. As early as 1833 the Second Council of Baltimore sent a message to Lyons, France, which read: "The benevolent hand which in your Catholic zeal you would extend over all parts of the world has spread a holy joy, both in our cities and as far as the extremity of our forests and our deserts..."

It was merely then returning a debt of gratitude when the Archbishop and Bishops of the United States, at the instigation of Pope Leo XIII resolved to form a unit of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in every diocese. America, which had received at the hands of Catholic Europe its missionaries and its prayers and alms, was now in turn to send its sons and daughters into pagan lands to carry the light of Faith and the Gospel of Christ to "those who sat in darkness."

In 1922 Pope Pius XI, the Pope of the Missions, raised this society to the dignity of a pontifical organization. His entire pontificate was marked by an unswerving devotion to the same cause for which the Son of God had offered His life, the Salvation of the World. Under his benign guidance mission districts were rapidly multiplied, the frontiers of Christendom were advanced, native sons and daughters aspired to the high calling of a religious vocation. In his famous mission Encyclical, "Motu Proprio," he decreed the establishment of a branch of the Propagation in every parish, and petitioned every Catholic to become a member. This was to be their fulfillment of Christ's command to "teach all nations."

The organization was first established in Rochester in 1927 by the Most Reverend John Francis O'Hern, then Bishop of Rochester. The Reverend Leo C. Mooney was appointed Diocesan Director of the Society. During the twelve years of its existence, the Society has contributed over \$792,866.61 to the missions of the world. In 1938 the Reverend John S. Randall succeeded Father Mooney as Director.

In the diocese as the world over, the second last Sunday in October is celebrated as Mission Sunday. On this day the prayers and alms of all the faithful are so

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O'Hern certain plots of land were set aside in the Cemetery for the use of families some of whose members are not Catholic; thus, permitting the burial side by side of a non-Catholic and Catholic husband or wife. The surrounding of all boundaries with iron fence and a new entrance erected on Dewey Avenue for pedestrians and automobiles were some of the improvements augmented during Bishop O'Hern's administration.

Succeeding Bishop O'Hern as president, the Most Reverend Archbishop Edward Mooney continued the developments to increase the efficiency and beauty of the Cemetery. During his administration a new regulation was passed by the Board of Trustees placing all lots, not under the Perpetual Care provision, under a small charge known as Annual Care. The construction of the stone wall on Lake Avenue Boulevard to guard new North sections was commented. A beautiful white marble crypt to be constructed in the tower of the Chapel was begun under the direction of Archbishop Mooney. The abandonment of the old St. Patrick's Cemetery, known as the Pinnacle Cemetery, and the removal of over 4,000 bodies into a beautiful plot in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery known as the Pinnacle Plot was completed in 1935 and was supervised by Mr. Frank J. Taylor, the superintendent of Holy Sepulchre.

The sale of the property on which the Cathedral and Chancery Offices were located, and in which the Main Office of the Cemetery was also located, compelled removal of this office. The Board of Trustees decided that for convenience of all peoples, the Main Office should be located at Cemetery. The reconstruction and rearrangement of buildings was made to accommodate the offices of the Clerk of the Board of Trustees at 2161 Lake Avenue.

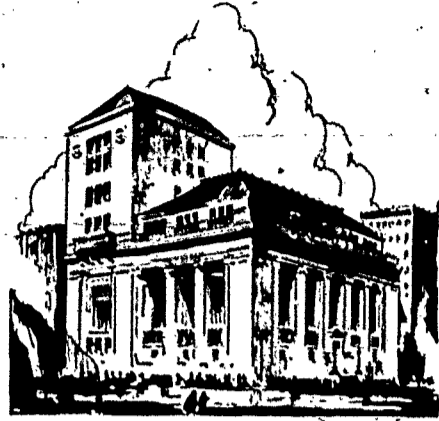
Upon the appointment of the fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Rochester, Most Reverend James E. Kearney, this crypt was completed and the removal of the remains of Bishop McQuaid and Bishop O'Hern made therein. The Crypt contains chambers for six Bishops and may be enlarged to contain six additional. A beautiful stained glass window, marble altar and bronze gates were installed by Bishop Kearney and the completed crypt is considered one of the most beautiful in the country. The final construction of stone wall and a new entrance to the North sections on the Lake Avenue Boulevard is in the process of completion. The setting apart of a plot of land to contain 500 to 10,000 graves for the burial of World War Veterans is a part of North Division development and the building of new roads and grading and opening of new sections continues to make this new division most attractive.

At the present writing there are approximately 95,000 interments in the Cemetery, and there remain large areas of land still undeveloped.

Three superintendents have faithfully served Holy Sepulchre Cemetery: Pierre Meisch, his son, John B. Meisch, and Frank J. Taylor, present superintendent.

The governing Board of the Cemetery and its Executives comprises a Board of Trustees of six clergy and four laymen and a clerk of the Board as follows:

- Most Reverend James E. Kearney, D.D., President.
- Right Reverend Msgr. William M. Hart, V.G., Treasurer.
- Right Reverend Msgr. Charles F. Shay, Secretary.
- Rt. Rev. Msgr. William F. Bergan, Chancellor.
- Rt. Rev. Msgr. John F. Boppel, Rev. Louis Edelman.
- Messrs. Edward P. Flynn, James K. Feely, James H. Hanna, William Hauser.
- Alice F. Kirk, Clerk of the Board of Trustees.



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