

Cemeteries

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ishes must rely on volunteers to help maintain the grounds and the monuments, Vogt added.

Our Mother of Sorrows Parish faces a different sort of problem. All available plots have already been sold, and because they were sold before the state law went into effect, no trust fund exists. Father Thomas Statt, pastor, noted that the work done in the cemetery is carried out by the parish's maintenance workers.

The parish is also handicapped by poorly kept records from earlier years, Father Statt observed. "People don't have any

deeds. (The sale of plots) was just a word-of-mouth deal," he added.

When all of the available land in their cemeteries has been sold, some parishes opt to purchase additional land, Vogt noted. In Ithaca, for example, all of the space had been used in Mount Olivet Cemetery, so Catholics opened Calvary Cemetery on the other side of town.

Holy Sepulchre, which now occupies 320 acres, is in no danger of being filled in the immediate future, Vogt noted. And as long as the church maintains its wish that Catholics be buried together, little danger exists that Catholic cemeteries will simply become a thing of the past.

"They are still an important factor in the life of the church," Vogt concluded.

House

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receive more personal care than what she was getting at a local hospital.

"I didn't like the care she was getting at the hospital," Sedore remarked. "And I didn't want her in a nursing home."

Family members said the situation improved greatly when Mrs. Lay moved to

Elisha House. There, Burrows noted, she could listen to her favorite Frank Sinatra songs on the radio, work at crossword puzzles in the newspaper, and enjoy a view of life outside from her second-story bedroom window.

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EDITORS' NOTE — Elisha House needs volunteers and donations. Those interested in contributing to the facility in either way may call the house at 716/464-8852.

Order

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visual changes — including white priests' vestments rather than the black of old — as symbols of the deceased's entrance into new life.

Yet Father Mull pointed to such changes as the inclusion of carefully worded prayers for deceased infants as examples of the order's most substantive change. "If you've ever been at an infant's funeral, that is one of the hardest things to celebrate," the priest said, noting that the mourners' pain is acknowledged directly by such new prayers that are suggested to open the funeral Mass for a baptized child:

Lord God, from whom human sadness is never hidden, you know the burden of grief that we feel at the loss of this child. As we mourn his/her passing from this life, comfort us with the knowledge that (name) lives now in your loving embrace ...

Such prayers offer sympathy with the parents' sorrow at the inexplicable loss of a young one, Father Mull explained, contrasting the tone of the revised order to such prayers the one that concluded the burial service for a child:

O God, Who in a marvelous way dost dispense the ministries of angels and of men, mercifully grant that our life on earth may be protected by those who minister to thee in heaven ...

"It's somewhat abstract and removed from the situation," Father Mull observed. He said another of the old prayers emphasizes the infinite heavenly happiness coming to the child who has died, yet "completely ignores the fact that people are sitting here crushed. The parents at this time don't want to hear how great heaven is."

Indeed, the personalized sensitivity that now marks a Catholic funeral rite extends even to once-taboo categories. Those who commit suicide — formerly excluded from Catholic funerals and burial — are now the subject of a specific Prayer of the Dead that can be used in the new rite:

Almighty God and Father of all, you strengthen us by the mystery of the cross and with the sacrament of your Son's resurrection. Have mercy on our brother/sister (name). Forgive all his/her sins and grant him/her peace. May we who mourn this sudden death be comforted and consoled by your protection.



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