

Bulletin Announcement (August 2019)

St. Joseph Cemetery Construction Update

We are pleased to announce that Phase 1 of the drainage and road improvement project is about to get underway. The first phase will focus on correcting the drainage problems in the Upper Section of the cemetery. White Engineering of Pittsfield prepared the drainage plans that were then approved by the Diocesan Building Committee. The drainage project was then put out to bid and four firms submitted bids. A J Virgilio Co. of Westfield was the low bidder. After background and experience checks, the firm was recently approved by the Diocese. Once a contract is signed, work will begin. The plan is to start the work in late August with completion in November.

The drainage work will consist of inspecting and cleaning the existing main drain lines to clear any blockages. New drain lines will be installed around the perimeter of the Upper Section to lower the high-water table, and new drain lines and catch basins will be installed in the areas where water accumulates in the spring and during big rainstorms. The goal is to eliminate the flooding that occurs on the grass and in the roads in the Upper Section. A second goal is to eliminate much of the water runoff that now travels down the long roadway to the Upper Section. That runoff often floods the roads and gravesites at the bottom of the hill. In a separate part of the drainage plan, volunteers started brush clearing in mid-July in the rear of the Lower Section to reopen drainage ditches that have become overgrown to allow water to drain to a small pond located in the woods. This should eliminate or greatly reduce the flooding in the lower section to the left of the main driveway to the Upper Section.

The plan is to complete the drainage work this fall and monitor the results during the winter and spring. If additional drainage work is needed, it will be done in the spring. Once everyone is satisfied that the drainage is working properly, road reconstruction planning will take place, plans drawn up and the work put out to bid. Work will take place in summer/fall 2020 and over the next few years as pledges are paid and funds are available.

All roads in the cemetery have been evaluated and rated based on their condition. Those roads in the worst condition will be totally reconstructed and done first. They will be followed by roads that are in fair condition and only need to be repaved. As indicated earlier, the estimated cost of doing the drainage work and reconstructing or repaving all the existing paved roads in the cemetery is \$1,800,000. The Capital Campaign raised \$1,200,000. Therefore, all roads will not be able to be repaved. Those roads remaining will be done over time as funds become available. Please remember too that gravel roads will not be repaved as part of this effort. They will continue to be graded and patched as needed.

We ask for your patience in the coming months as drainage work is underway. Cemetery staff will coordinate with funeral directors to have work stopped or moved to another section during burials. If you do have concerns, please stop by the Cemetery office and speak with Jay Meehan, Cemetery Superintendent or Nancy Nolan, Office Manager. Thank you.

The St. Joseph Cemetery Commission