

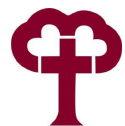
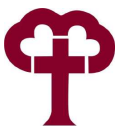
GATE OF HEAVEN CEMETERY

Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Farmland to Cemetery

A Walk Through Time

1948 - 2025



Honoring Life on Sacred Ground

In commemoration of the historic legacy of Gate of Heaven Cemetery, we dedicate this work in recognition to local ordinaries called to serve the faithful of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati since its inception. We extend our profound gratitude to God for these shepherds summoned to *Sanctify, Teach, and Govern* the local church of Cincinnati.

Bishop Edward D. Fenwick
1821 - 1832

Archbishop John B. Purcell
1833 - 1883

Archbishop William H. Elder
1883 - 1904

Archbishop Henry K. Moeller
1904 - 1925

Archbishop John T. McNicholas
1925 - 1950

Archbishop Karl J. Alter
1950 - 1969

Archbishop Paul F. Leibold
1969 - 1972

Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin
1972 - 1982

Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk
1982 - 2009

Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr
2009 - 2025

Archbishop Robert G. Casey
2025 - current



Welcoming Archbishop Robert G. Casey

Archbishop Schnurr's Warm Welcome

Excerpted from The Catholic Telegraph, April 2025, "Answering the Call to Lead", page 33

Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr congratulated Archbishop – designate Casey on his appointment.

"It has been my great honor and privilege to serve the people of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati these past 15 years. Now, on behalf of the people of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, it is a great joy to welcome Archbishop – designate Robert Casey to his new home. Archbishop – Casey is highly regarded by the people and the priests he serves, and I am pleased such a good man will be shepherding the people of this Archdiocese of Cincinnati."



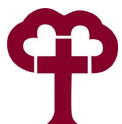
Let us all join together in expressing our heartfelt gratitude to Archbishop Schnurr and extend our prayers and congratulations to our Archbishop- designate Robert G Casey.

Welcome Message from Tom Jordan, Director of Cemeteries

On behalf of Gate of Heaven Cemetery, I extend a warm and heartfelt Cincinnati welcome to Archbishop-designate Casey. For 77 years, Gate of Heaven has been a sacred gem of the Archdiocese, providing a place of peace, prayer, and remembrance for the faithful. We are honored to continue this mission under your leadership and look forward to serving the Church and our community in unity with your vision. May God bless you abundantly in your new ministry.



Sincerely,
Tom Jordan, CCCE
Director of Cemeteries, Archdiocese of Cincinnati



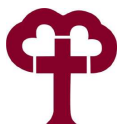
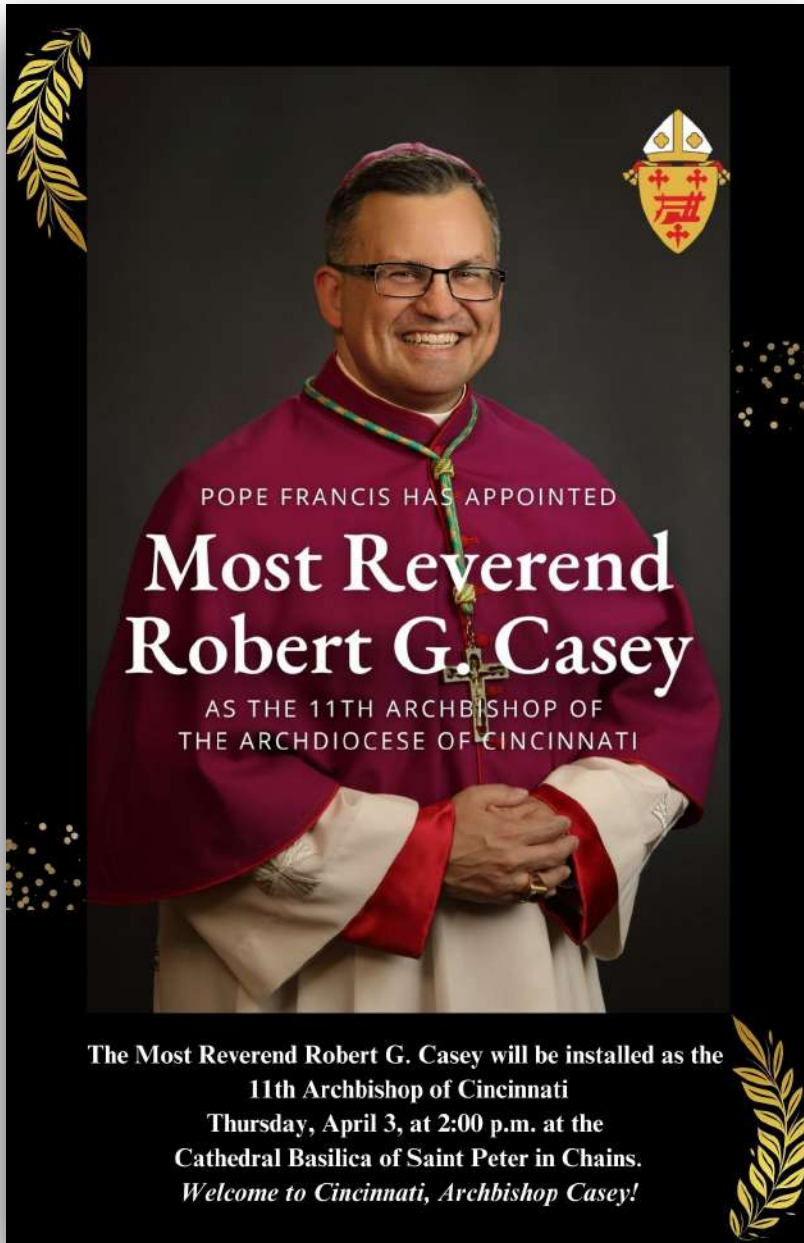
Excerpted from *The Catholic Telegraph*, 194th year, Issue 4,
A Letter from Archbishop - Designate,

The Journey to Cincinnati

As I begin my journey with you in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, I look forward to discovering together the presence of Christ in our midst. With Christ to instruct and guide, I hope that we can help one another to view the world around us in the light of Christ and experience together the blessing of being one with God and one with neighbor. With the Word of God, as our inspiration and the Divine Light of Christ, as our beacon, we will find our way, each step leading us out of the darkness of sin and division and into the light of reconciliation. With the assistance of God's Saints and angels, who intercede for us, I look forward to walking with you and sharing the peace, love, and joy that has been offered to us through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Sincerely, yours in Christ,

Archbishop Robert G. Casey

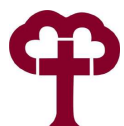




Farmland to Cemetery

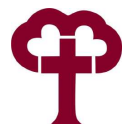
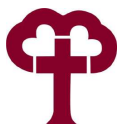
Nestled in the embrace of time, Gate of Heaven Cemetery stands as a poignant testament to a legacy spanning 77 years. Born from the vision of the late Archbishop John Timothy McNicholas, the fifth ordinary of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, it opened in 1948 as a sacred haven for the Catholic community, for respectful burial of their beloved dead. Before it became a sanctuary for souls, it served a purpose rooted in agriculture.

What was once farmland for 7 families, this acquisition by the archdiocese continued in its original use, farming, for a short period. The tilling of soil that supported their sustenance, seminarians from the local Catholic seminary prayed their sacred office while seeding the sacred ground. Little did they realize, the ground that produced food for their table, would one day become a resting place for the souls they would one day bury.



Visionary | Archbishop John Timothy McNicholas

Archbishop John Timothy McNicholas, a post-World War II luminary, shaped the U.S. Catholic landscape. A catalyst for social reform, evangelization, and education, he envisioned the growing Catholic population in Cincinnati. Building churches and foreseeing needs, he secured farmland on Montgomery Pike for an archdiocesan cemetery—a visionary leader in a transformative era. On April 22, 1950, the peaceful landscape of a cemetery, once fertile farmland, became the final resting place for Archbishop John Timothy McNicholas. His interment marked the eighty-fifth in the new cemetery which five years prior, had been dedicated to the growth of crops. In this transformation from fields to a sacred resting ground, the cycles of life found a poignant expression, as the Archbishop rests on the grounds seminarians once cultivated.



+ THE MOST REVEREND JOHN TIMOTHY McNICHOLAS, O.P., S.T.M. +

ARCHBISHOP OF CINCINNATI

Archbishop John T. McNicholas, O.P., died suddenly at his residence in Cincinnati, Ohio on April 22, 1950.

Born on December 15, 1877, in Kiltimagh, County Mayo, Ireland, he was the youngest of the eight children of Patrick J. and Mary (Mullany) McNicholas.

His early education was acquired at Immaculate Heart of Mary School in Chester, Pa. After attending St. Joseph's College in Philadelphia, he entered the Order of Preachers, receiving the habit at St. Rose Priory, Springfield, Ky. on October 10, 1894. Pronouncing his vows on October 10, 1895, he completed his philosophical and theological studies at St. Joseph Priory, Somerset, Ohio. He was ordained at St. Joseph's on October 10, 1901 by the Most Reverend Henry Moeller, Bishop of Columbus.

Archbishop McNicholas had a most distinguished career, marked by an unsurpassed variety and fullness. He was chosen repeatedly by the Bishops of the United States for membership on the Administrative Board of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and for the past several years has served as Chairman of the Board, guiding the activities of that body in its many domestic concerns as well as in war relief projects throughout the world. His interest in education and his accomplishments in that field brought to him the offices of Episcopal Chairman of the Education Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and president of the National Catholic Education Association. He also served as a member of the Board of trustees and as chairman of the Pontifical Committee for Sacred Sciences at the Catholic University.

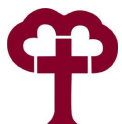
On April 27, 1950, a Solemn Pontifical Mass of Requiem was celebrated at St. Monica's Cathedral, Cincinnati, by the Most Reverend Amleto G. Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States.

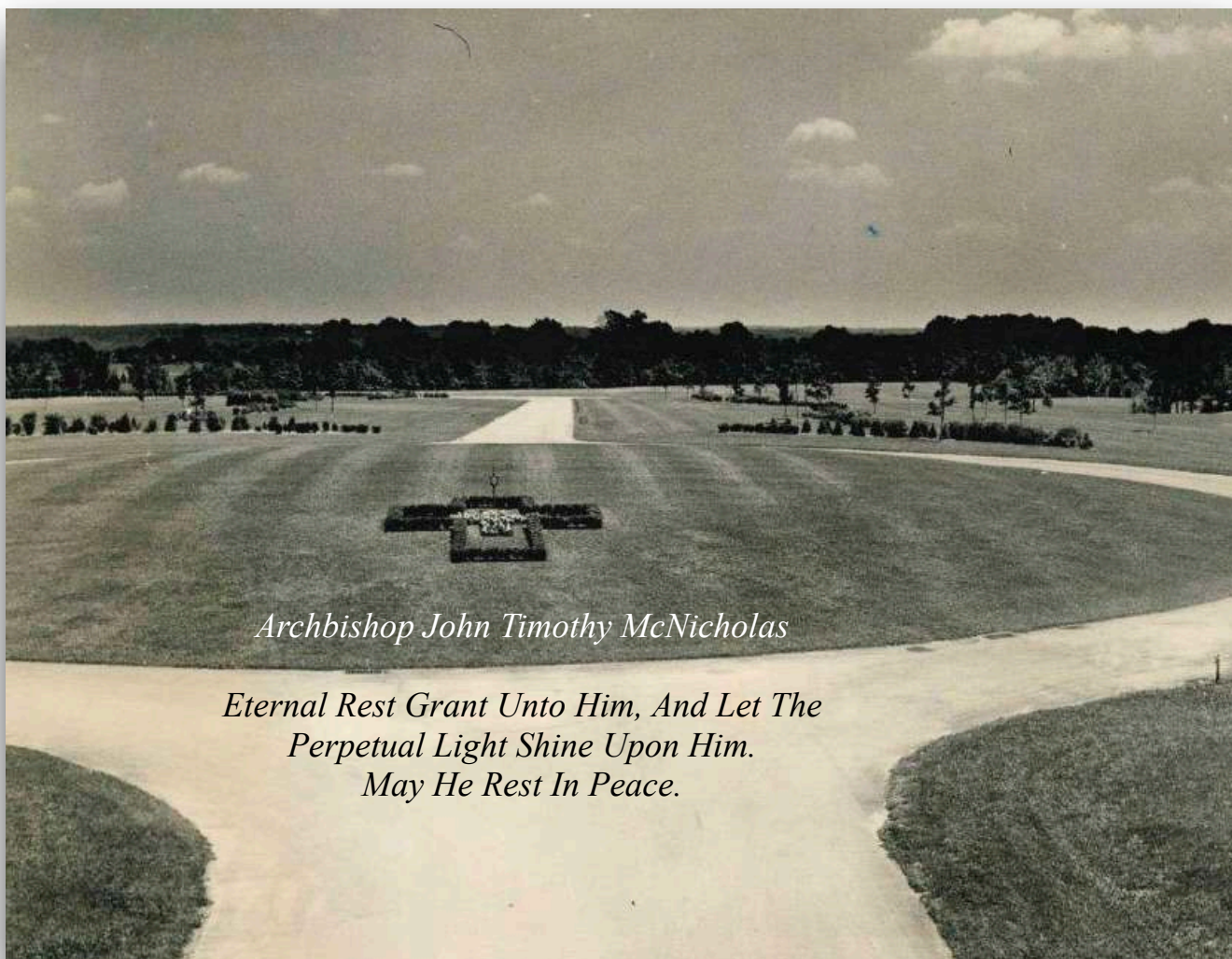
The eulogy was preached by the Rev. H. I. Smith, O.P., of the Dominican House of Studies, Washington. Cardinals Francis Spellman of New York, Edward Mooney of Detroit and Samuel Stritch of Chicago attended the Mass, together with six Archbishops, thirty Bishops, hundreds of Dominican and diocesan priests and many prominent laymen, including two representatives of the President of the United States, national, state and civic dignitaries. Thousands of people thronged outside the cathedral and lined the streets to pay a final tribute to their beloved Archbishop.

The burial took place in the Gate of Heaven Cemetery where the Apostolic Delegate conducted the final absolution.

Dominicana extends sincere sympathy to the relatives, friends and flock of Archbishop McNicholas. May he rest in peace.

Excerpt of Archbishop John Timothy McNicholas' obituary

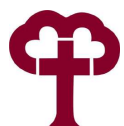




Archbishop John Timothy McNicholas

*Eternal Rest Grant Unto Him, And Let The
Perpetual Light Shine Upon Him.
May He Rest In Peace.*

Priest mound at the entrance of the cemetery



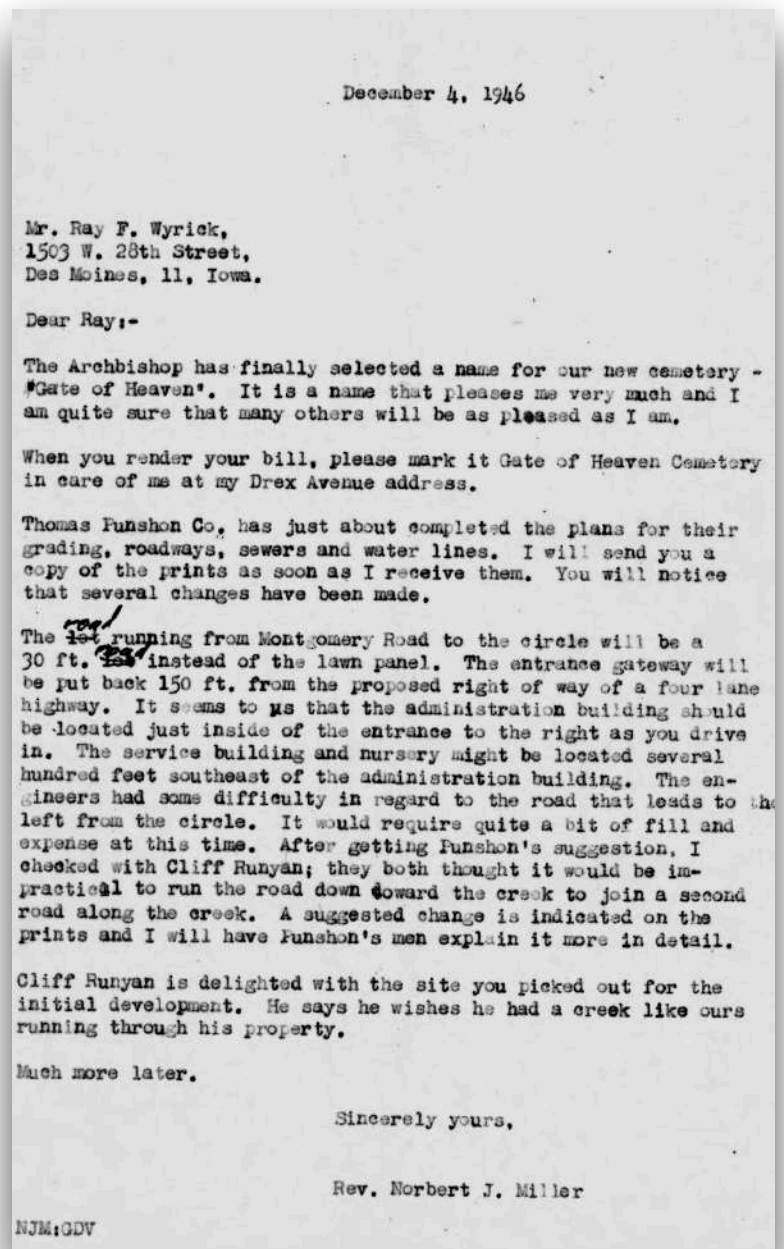
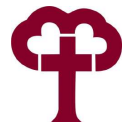
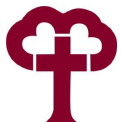
Early Correspondence -
Fr. Norbert Miller
Ray F. Wyrick

With a vision to transform farmland into a sacred space, the Archbishop entrusted Fr. Norbert Miller with the project. Fr. Miller, acting on behalf of the archbishop, enlisted the expertise of Ray F. Wyrick, a landscape engineer from Des Moines, Iowa. Their correspondence and collaboration began in 1945, spanning 35 months which included Ray making multiple visits to Cincinnati.

Ray's progressive mindset steered the design towards a park-like setting, departing from traditional stone monuments. Streets flowed seamlessly, and meticulous landscaping adorned the grounds. Today, 77 years later, the breathtaking beauty and park-like ambiance of Gate of Heaven Cemetery is a testament to Ray Wyrick's visionary touch—a tribute to his enduring legacy. Thank you, Ray Wyrick, for turning a vision into a timeless reality.

On January 29, 1945, Ray, in a display of his professionalism, penned two letters to Fr. Miller. In the first, he expressed his concern regarding expenses totaling \$136.00, with an additional \$2.00 earmarked for a blueprint.

While these figures may elicit a wry smile from modern eyes, they speak volumes about Ray's dedication to financial transparency in serving his client.



The second letter of the same date numbered twenty-one pages long. The content listed many intricate considerations of a project of this magnitude.

Pasted black and white photos adorned several pages, serving as visual aids to the detailed text. Among the myriad considerations, the matter of naming the new cemetery took center stage, with Ray presenting a list of eight potential names.

After a patient wait of 23 months, a letter dated ***December 4, 1946***, from Fr. Miller, conveying the Archbishop's final selection for the Cemetery's name—
"Gate of Heaven."

The Archbishop's endorsement echoed, "It is a name that pleases me very much, and I am quite sure that many others will be as pleased as I am." These words sealed the fate of the cemetery's name.

In the subsequent correspondence from the Archdiocese, the letterhead proudly bore the name -

"Gate of Heaven Cemetery"
2420 Drew Avenue
Norwood 12, Ohio.

This was not the establishment of a physical address, but the embodiment of a vision meticulously crafted through letters and considerations, now etched in the serene landscape of Gate of Heaven Cemetery.



Officially Open | A Letter From the Chancellor

On September 8, 1948, the Chancellor of the Archdiocese, Fr. Paul F. Leibold—subsequently ordained Archbishop Leibold, the seventh ordinary of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati—sent a letter of official notice to all parish pastors. This letter heralded the inauguration of the new Archdiocesan Cemetery, proclaiming it to be "...now ready to take care of burials." In his letter, he fervently expressed the imperative "obligation of Catholics to provide for burial in consecrated ground." His letter was to be read at all Masses in every parish of the Archdiocese on September 12, 1948.

"The time to prepare for true Christian burial is well in advance of the actual time of death." - Fr. Paul F. Leibold



THE CHANCERY

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI
29 EAST EIGHTH STREET
CINCINNATI 2, OHIO

September 8, 1948

Reverend dear Father:

Our new Diocesan cemetery, Gate of Heaven, located at Montgomery and Cornell Roads in Hamilton County, is now ready to take care of burials. The legal title of this cemetery is invested in the Archdiocese. His Grace, the Most Reverend Archbishop, has appointed Father Norbert J. Miller as its Director.

The work of constructing roads and of landscaping the property is progressing satisfactorily. All lots are sold with perpetual care. They may be bought on the installment plan. An office for this cemetery will be opened at The Chancery, second floor, Eighth and Walnut Streets.

We cannot lay stress too strongly on the obligation of Catholics to provide for burial in consecrated ground. The Church law declares that Catholics who are not buried in consecrated ground should be refused Christian burial, which denies all its attendant ceremonies and blessings. The time to prepare for true Christian burial is well in advance of the actual time of death.

Pastors are urged to make this announcement to their parishioners. This letter is to be read at all Masses on Sunday, September 12, 1948.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Paul F. Leibold
Chancellor



Towering Witness of Faith



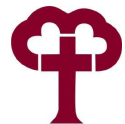
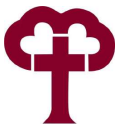
In the 1950s and 1960s, as the Cemetery expanded and evolved, efforts were focused on creating distinctive burial sections, enhancing landscaping, and the promotion of the new Archdiocesan Cemetery. Recognizing the importance of a powerful symbol to reflect the Catholic faith, a decision was made to establish a significant landmark.

In May 1968, a towering 80-foot obelisk costing \$72,106, was erected at the heart of section four, exclusively dedicated to the clergy of the Archdiocese. Between the Cemetery's inception in 1948 and the installation of the obelisk in 1960, six individuals were laid to rest in section four. They include five priests and Archbishop McNicholas.

Why an obelisk? The choice of an obelisk is rooted in its symbolism of eternity and immortality, its lofty, narrowing structure acting as a link between heaven and earth. While typically adorned with gold-covered pinnacles to catch the sunlight, Gate of Heaven and the Archdiocese viewed this obelisk, strategically placed near the Cemetery entrance, as a profound expression of faith. Instead of gold at its pinnacle, the cross is lifted high. This sacred symbol embodies the Catholic faith, drawing inspiration from the words of St. John's Gospel, where Jesus declares,

"And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself. "
- John 12:32

We are baptized into the death of Jesus, and upon our physical passing from this life to the next, we are then gathered in Christ on the sacred grounds of Gate of Heaven. Christ draws all to himself by His sacrifice on the cross.



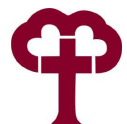
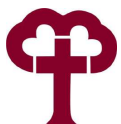
Building Buildings | Professional Care - Perpetual Care

In the 1950s and 1960s, Director Fr. Norbert Miller emphasized anticipating future needs. While burying the dead is a corporal work of mercy, ensuring perpetual care for the grounds reflects profound respect for our departed. Addressing equipment requirements, a new maintenance building was constructed in the late 1950s. This new building replaced an aged structure from the farming era. Housing modern service trucks, mowers, backhoes, and more, it showcases Fr. Miller's foresight. Planning for equipment upkeep was also integral, with the facility equipped with lifts for maintenance and repairs. Over time, this structure expanded to meet the growing needs of the Cemetery. Presently, our dedicated Cemetery services team takes immense pride in their workspace, diligently maintaining both the area and equipment.



Old Barn from the farming era becomes cemetery maintenance garage in 1948. Located in what is now section three of the cemetery, it was torn down after the new maintenance building was built in the 1950s.

During the same time-frame, unwavering professional care remained a constant. Navigating the path of grief alongside mourning families was of utmost importance and remains a top priority today. The first administration building would soon accommodate professionals who minister to families through their moments of loss. Plans for the administration building emerged in the 1960s, and the construction project was successfully completed in 1970.



Three in One | A Trinitarian Use of Space



Gate of Heaven Cemetery's growth continued as numerous Catholic families in the Archdiocese turned to their services in times of need. The 1970s witnessed the expansion of the Catholic community northeast of Cincinnati. The Community of the Good Shepherd was established in 1973. The new Gate of Heaven administration building, constructed at the front of the property, served as the business space for the Cemetery, chapels for committal services during inclement weather, and the temporary parish church for the budding faith of the new parish. The Archdiocese generously granted the new parish 13 acres of Gate of Heaven property to construct their new church. Today, The Community of the Good Shepherd is one of the largest Catholic parishes in the Archdiocese, with its sacramental life initially rooted on cemetery grounds.

Fr. Norbert Miller, director of Gate of Heaven Cemetery, named Fr. Francis Neihaus as the second Director of Cemeteries for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. In the early 1970s, Fr. Neihaus concurrently served as the first pastor of the The Community of the Good Shepherd while fulfilling his Cemetery duties.

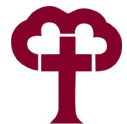
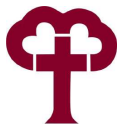


Till Death Do We Part *(little cemetery humor)*

The adjacent photos from August 28, 1976 depict Fr. Neihaus as the church's official witness to the sacred vows of John and Vicki Kundrant. Beyond the solemnization of nuptials, Fr. Neihaus assumes the mantle of the first pastor of the Community of the Good Shepherd. Under him, Gate of Heaven's Chapels served for Sunday Mass, baptisms, and matrimonial bliss. Within this sacred ground, the administration building doubles as both sacred sanctuary and housing for Fr. Neihaus in his tireless devotion to God, community, and archdiocese alike. Inscribed on the pages of history, Fr. Neihaus stands as a beacon of unwavering service, etching his indelible mark upon the legacy of Gate of Heaven, where the administration building bears witness to his enduring dedication.



Fr. Francis Neihaus presides at the marriage of John and Vicki Kundrant, August 28, 1976.



New Director - New Direction - New Connections



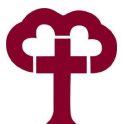
In 1976, Gate of Heaven welcomed its first lay Director of Cemeteries appointed by the Archdiocese, Irwin C. Benken. He played a pivotal role in navigating and advocating for the

diverse needs of Catholic burial, especially in light of the evolving teachings on cremation. Providing Catholics with expanded options for the disposition of their loved ones was a major focus for him. Under his leadership, Gate of Heaven



witnessed the development of its inaugural mausoleum complex in the early 1980s, enhancing the cemetery's overall beauty. Additionally, he spearheaded the installation of numerous columbaria around the Cemetery property. Following the 1963 issuance of ***"The Decree on the Sacred Liturgy" (Sacrosanctum Concilium)*** by the Second Vatican Council, which permitted cremation for Catholics under certain conditions, Irwin Benken's visionary approach to expanding burial options within the Catholic tradition proved not only beneficial but

indispensable. Today, forty-eight years since Irwin assumed his role as Director of Cemeteries, Gate of Heaven has 1,888 above-ground crypts and over 3,000 cremation niches spread across multiple columbaria across its 160-acre expanse. Each columbaria is accented with beautiful landscaping adding to the serene prayerful setting of the Cemetery.



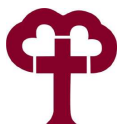
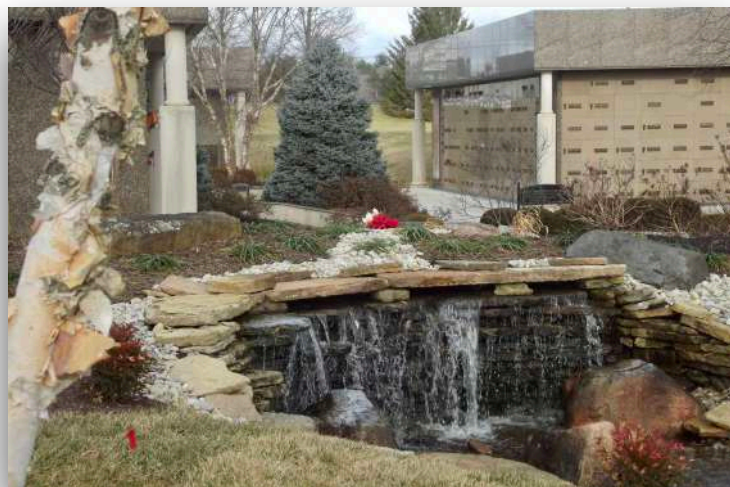
With foresight ahead of his time, Benken forged vital connections within the Catholic Community through pioneering internet technology in the 1990s. His stewardship ensured the continued growth and excellence of Gate of Heaven Cemetery's professional operations, marking a transformative chapter in its history.

Reflecting Faith | “I saw Water Flowing...” -Ezekiel 47

Over a span of 35 years, Irwin Benken and his successors, Deb Crane (2010-2020) and Tom Jordan (2020-present), shared a unified vision: to enhance the tranquil beauty of Gate of Heaven Cemetery. Drawing inspiration from sacred scripture, where water symbolizes Christ's saving grace, they embarked on a journey to enrich the grounds with water features. As Jesus proclaimed to the Samaritan woman in Saint John's Gospel,

"the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

These additions elevate the Cemetery's aesthetic appeal and serve as a perpetual reminder of Christ's promise of resurrection. The serene beauty and gentle murmur of fountains or flowing water provide a soothing backdrop for prayer and enriching the spiritual journey of all who visit. The four water features are Garden of Ascension, installed in 1996, located at the front of the property, The Bell Tower, installed in 1988, near Veterans Garden, Garden of Gethsemane, installed in 2014, near the Mausoleum Complex on the south-west corner of the property, and Baptism of Christ installed in July of 2024 in the front of the property.



Sacred Art on Sacred Ground - Gethsemane

Genuine sacred art draws man to adoration, to prayer, and to the love of God, Creator and Savior, the Holy One and Sanctifier. -Catechism of the Catholic Church 2502

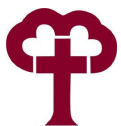
Beginning in 2008 under Directors Paula Rooks and Vickie Fisher, culminating to completion in 2014 under Director Deb Crane a sacred haven was created on cemetery grounds bearing the name Garden of Gethsemane. This new section has four beautiful,

organically shaped buildings that are set around a trickling waterfall under towering, majestic trees; truly a resplendent edifice. Ms. Crane was determined to find the right artist capable of breathing life into her vision. She connected with artist Alexander and Daniela Mandrajiev of Alexander studios in California.



“Sit here while I pray.” -Mark 14:32

This project gave the artist opportunity to use an array of materials - natural stone, raw, semi precious stones, granite, marble, quartzite, Venetian smalti god glass - most vibrant of all, Jerusalem stone. This stone was used to make the top of the boulder upon which Christ is resting his hands in prayer and which appears to be gathering the light from the Holy Spirit. All of these materials were carefully selected and color rendered especially for this project. The texture, shapes and movement of light bring to life this unique and moving mosaic. This evocative artistic masterpiece invites those gazing on its beauty to hear the words of Jesus in his final hours on earth, *“Sit here while I pray.” -Mark 14:32*



Statues and Monuments - Prayer, Pondering and Pilgrimage

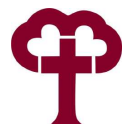
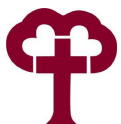
Through the 1990s and into the twenty-first century, a committed effort to enhance spiritual devotion of the cemetery - by adding statues and monuments of profound significance - was evident. Through strategic positioning and meticulous landscaping, these stone and bronze marvels were seamlessly integrated, imbuing



this ground with an aura of sanctity, a true sanctuary of prayer. Each saintly figure or monument beckons the soul to ponder the resplendent legacy of those who ardently embraced the way of Christ and His Gospel.

As one ponders the saintly lives through these artists' expressions of sculpted stone and cast bronze, musing more deeply on the ground where lives are remembered with markers installed flush with the ground, should also lead to prayerful remembrance.

Pope Francis once remarked that ordinary people living heroic lives are all around us. With this in mind we can ponder that here within Gate of Heaven's sacred ground may lie a saint, not officially recognized by the church, but may indeed be recognized "saint" by Christ Himself. With this in mind local parishioner Antonio Losekamp remarked, Gate of Heaven Cemetery, surely, has at least one saint buried here – someone who lived a heroic life for Christ and the Church – thereby making any visit to ***Gate of Heaven a pilgrimage***, in fact, just like a visit to St. Peter's Basilica, the Roman Catacombs, Lourdes, or any other European place of Christian Antiquity." We are led to prayer, pondering and pilgrimage with any visit.

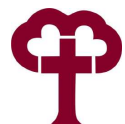
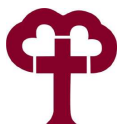


Special Gardens | Baby Gardens

Navigating the unfathomable pain of losing a child can be a journey fraught with sorrow and anguish. From its inception, Gate of Heaven Cemetery has stood with grieving parents, offering unwavering support in their darkest hours.

Through the Cemetery's storied history, three sacred areas, lovingly termed "Baby Gardens," have been consecrated to honor the precious lives of children lost too soon. The first of these sanctuaries was established in section one in 1948, followed by a second in section two in the mid-1960s, and a third in section twenty-eight in 2005.

Within these hallowed grounds, families incur no cost to bury children two years old or younger, as we offer all possible support to every grieving parent who entrust their child to Gate of Heaven's care.

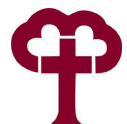
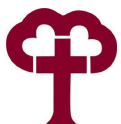
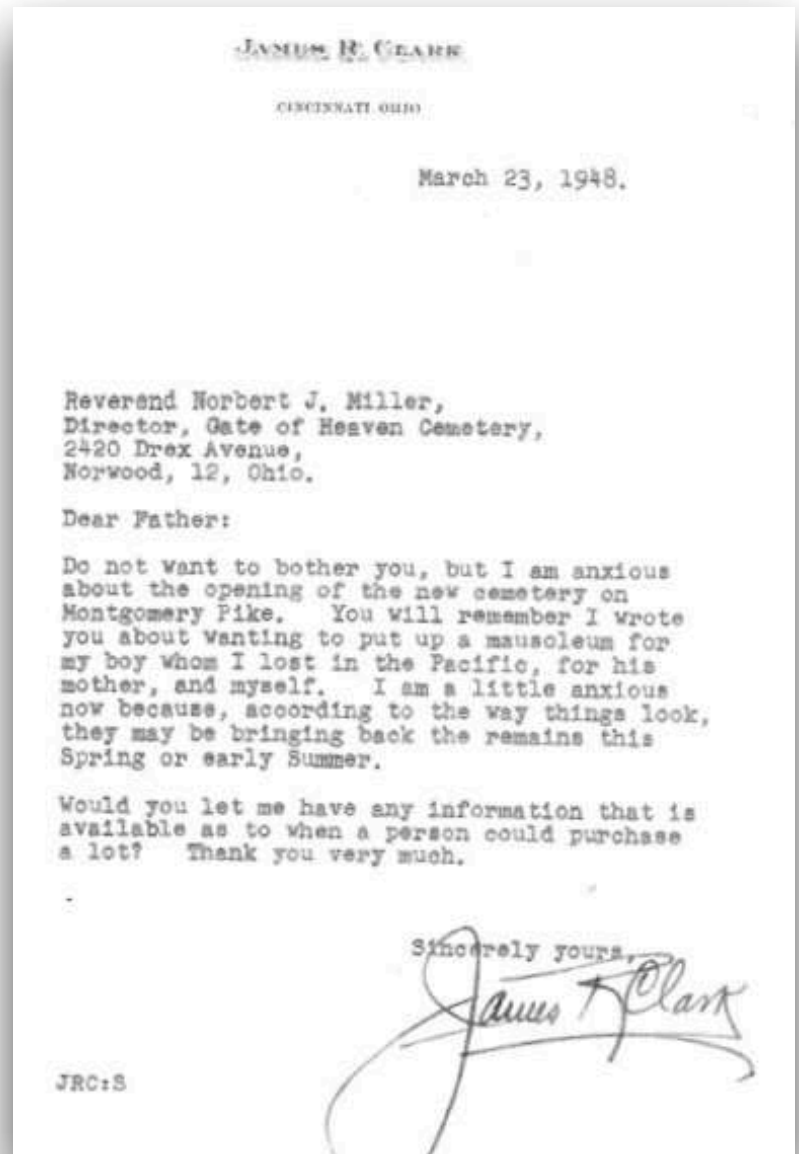


Special Gardens | Veterans Garden

Since 1948, many military personnel have been laid to rest at Gate of Heaven Cemetery. Every veteran laid to rest at Gate of Heaven is held in highest esteem for serving their country. Each soldier has a story; we share only three in this presentation.

Lt. William D. Clark was killed in the Pacific during WWII. In a letter dated 23 March 1948 his father James Clark writes to Gate of Heaven Director Fr. Norbert Miller. Mr. Clark asked to have a family mausoleum built for the remains of his son, his wife and himself. Lt. Clark's remains were interred in the family mausoleum on 28 July 1950. The Clark mausoleum is the first of many private mausoleums in Gate of Heaven.

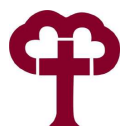
Staff Sergeant Jack Freppon was laid to rest at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in 1969. He is the most posthumously decorated Vietnam Veteran in the city of Cincinnati. Staff Sergeant Freppon (ASN: RA-11654412), United States Army was recognized for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. A special memorial service was held at Gate of Heaven on October 28, 2023 marking 50 years of the United States involvement in Vietnam War. Staff Sgt. Freppon's story was part of this presentation. Gate of Heaven Cemetery donated \$3,000 to Purcell Marion Scholarship fund in Sgt. Freppon's honor.





During the War on Terror, Staff Sgt. Matt Maupin was captured in 2004. The story of this 20-year-old patriot was national news and inspired the local community. His body was found in March of 2008 and was laid to rest at Gate of Heaven Cemetery in a private ceremony on April 27, 2008.

During the early 2010s, Gate of Heaven embarked on a noble endeavor by dedicating a special section to honor veterans. Within this sacred space are flags representing every branch of the United States Armed Forces. Yet, it is the unmistakable presence of the American flag, proudly unfurled at the front of the Veteran Garden, that commands reverence from those who approach, paying homage to the cherished souls laid to rest in this hallowed ground.

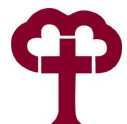


Prayer | Front and Center

From Gate of Heaven's beginning in 1948 to the present, prayer has been the cornerstone of our mission at Gate of Heaven Cemetery. Around 2008, Director Paula Rooks brought a profound renewal to our daily routine by introducing morning prayer among cemetery employees in the 1990s, a tradition upheld steadfastly since then. Each day, before our doors open, our dedicated staff unites in this sacred gathering with personal intentions and always ends the prayer with special intention for those to be interred at Gate of Heaven that day.

*Eternal rest grant unto them and let Your perpetual
light shine upon them. May they rest in peace.
-Order of Christian Funeral*

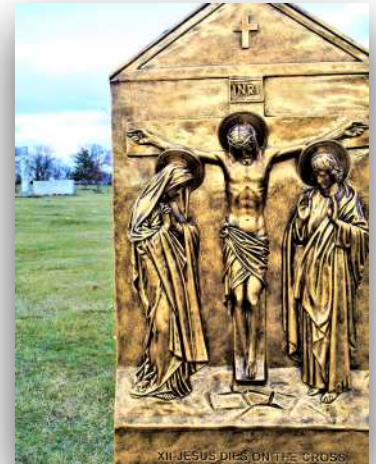
Our meticulously tended grounds provide a serene setting for the annual gathering of the entire Archdiocese on Memorial Day for Mass. This sacred liturgy is always celebrated with the local ordinary as principal presider and many concelebrating priests. Also serving Memorial Day Mass are several vested deacons, Knights of Columbus chapters, parish musicians and typically more than one thousand Archdiocesan faithful. This tradition, initiated by Director Fr. Francis Neihuas in the 1970s, remains a cherished moment in our calendar. Additionally, we honor our departed with monthly Mind (remembrance) Mass, a practice initiated during the same period, ensuring ongoing support for grieving families.



"True prayer is nothing but love." - St. Augustine

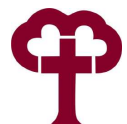
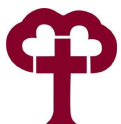


In our communal prayers for departed loved ones and friends, we express devotion to God and an enduring love for those who have gone before us. Our prayers serve as a testament to our unwavering hope in the resurrection promised by Christ, an affirmation that death does not sever, and hope in the risen Christ which strengthens the bonds of love.



More Than Curb Appeal

In 1996, a transformative project called the Garden of Ascension began, adding a series of ponds with fountains into a stunning masterpiece that enhance the beauty of Gate of Heaven. The project was designed to allow for future columbaria to be added around this breathtaking water feature. Now ten columbaria have been installed along a winding sidewalk. This captivating addition delights the eye and offers solace to grieving hearts. The walkway ensures that visitors can easily reach the niches permanently containing sacred remains.



In 2010, the main entrance at Cornell Road underwent a remarkable metamorphosis with the addition of two monumental walls bearing the Cemetery's name etched in stone. Enhanced by exquisite landscaping, these walls stand as beacons of majesty, welcoming visitors with unparalleled grace.

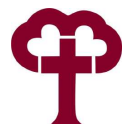
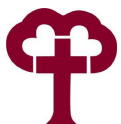
In 2018, the administration building was renovated, including the addition of two new rooms flanking the entrance lobby. Named "Mary, Gate Of Heaven" and "Saint Peter, Keys to Heaven," these sanctuaries boast glass-front niches that captivate the beholder with their beauty and unique customization.



Uniquely Gate of Heaven | Signage and Logos

The notion of brand recognition within ministry may seem peculiar, yet it finds it is rooted in the most ancient Christian tradition. Christian symbols, emerging as outward emblems of like-minded believers in the person of Jesus, paved the path for such recognition. In this vein, branding assumes the mantle of a cornerstone, intricately weaving a tapestry of trust, familiarity, and credibility within the community.

Since its founding in 1948, Gate of Heaven Cemetery has embraced this tradition, suggesting within its signage and logos a timeless message:



"Honoring Life On Sacred Ground." This phrase encapsulates the very essence of our ministry, echoing through the years with steadfast resonance.

The inaugurated signage of our humble beginning slowly led to a lasting logo in 1973, and the grandeur of block wall signage erected in 2008, each outward impression serves as a testament to this sacred place. Here, amidst the hallowed grounds, our departed loved ones find solace, and families gather in prayerful contemplation to honor and remember those who have gone before us.

In preserving this legacy of brand identity, Gate of Heaven Cemetery not only communicates its mission and values but also beckons seekers of spiritual guidance and support. Through consistent branding across various channels, we fortify our connections with constituents, amplifying our visibility and extending our reach far beyond the boundaries of our physical sanctuary.

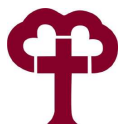
Thus, as the sun sets on each day and rises anew, our ministry continues to fulfill its purpose:

Honoring Life On Sacred Ground.

Original Signage: Archdiocese of Cincinnati Coat of Arms

Logo Creation: Graphic Designer Tom Neihuas

(brother of Fr. Frank Neihaus)



Gate of Heaven Cemetery Interesting Facts - June 2024



First Interment
Mary V. Falter
27 February 1948



First Child Interment
Terrence Michael Helmick -Age 4 years old
12 October 1948



Oldest person Interment
Mary Tay See- Age 110
Born in China - 14 July 1910
Died - 22 November 2020



Total number of infants Interments
(2 yrs and under)
2,044

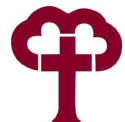
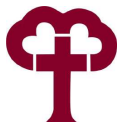
Total number of Infants
in Baby Garden - 1722

Total number of Veterans Interments
7,412

Total number of Bishop Interments
6

Total number of Priest Interments
131

Total number of Interments
49,552 as of 31 March 2025



Christ Yesterday, Today, and Always -Hebrews 13:8

Tom Jordan, the Director of Cemeteries for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati (2020 - present), holds a steadfast commitment to the Catholic spirituality of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. He diligently oversees the sacred duty of burying the dead and ensures that the faithful are prayed for. With a forward-thinking approach, Tom is mindful of the evolving needs for proper burial options, ensuring that the Catholic Community of Cincinnati is provided with dignified and respectful interment choices, honoring both tradition and future requirements. His leadership reflects a deep dedication to upholding the church's teachings and serving the community with compassion and foresight.

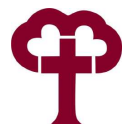
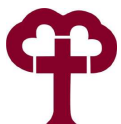
Enhancing the beauty of Gate of Heaven Cemetery is a new mausoleum dedicated to Saints Gertrude and Padre Pio. Construction began June 2023 and was completed, 28 June 2024 on the memorial date of Saint Irenaeus. Irenaeus is quoted to have said, "The glory of God is man fully alive." -*Saint Irenaeus, 130 a.d.*

This quote profoundly encapsulates the essence of Catholic Cemetery ministry. Our mission is to live in the hope of resurrection, where all in Christ are eternally alive to the glory of God.



Saints Gertrude and Padre Pio Mausoleum

"Christ Yesterday, Today and Always." - Hebrews 13:8



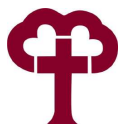


*From Left to Right
Deacon Tim Schutte | Archbishop Robert Casey | Tom Jordan*

A Sacred Beginning **The Installation of Archbishop Robert G. Casey** *April 3, 2025 – Cathedral Basilica of Saint Peter in Chains*

On a rainy spring afternoon—April 3, 2025—the Archdiocese of Cincinnati witnessed a historic and grace-filled moment: the installation of Archbishop Robert Casey as the eleventh Archbishop of Cincinnati. Though the skies were gray, the spirit inside the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Peter in Chains was radiant with joy, reverence, and deep faith. Nothing—not even the weather—could dampen the beauty of what was about to unfold.

The liturgy began with a breathtaking 30-minute procession. What seemed like over 200 priests and deacons entered the cathedral in reverent silence, followed by several bishops from across the United States. Among the honored guests were Cardinals and the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, who served as the official representative of Pope Francis.



At the great bronze doors of the Cathedral Basilica of Saint Peter in Chains, Archbishop Casey was formally greeted. The Apostolic Mandate—a decree from Pope Francis appointing him Archbishop—was read aloud to the faithful, affirming the Holy Father’s confidence in his pastoral leadership. In a moving gesture of continuity, the retiring Archbishop and the Nuncio then escorted Archbishop Casey to the cathedra, the bishop’s chair, symbolizing his authority and service to the local Church.

The liturgy that followed was both majestic and intimate. The soaring music, sacred rites, and vibrant participation of the faithful made clear the deep love and unity of the Church in Cincinnati. As the Mass concluded, Archbishop Casey addressed the congregation with visible emotion. He offered heartfelt thanks to Jesus Christ and to the Blessed Virgin Mary, recognizing their presence and guidance throughout his life. His words reflected humility, joy, and a sincere commitment to shepherd the people of God with love.

This day will long be remembered not only for its grandeur but for the spirit of hope it brought to the archdiocese.

Gate of Heaven Cemetery joins the entire Archdiocese in welcoming Archbishop Robert Casey with open hearts and prayerful support. As a sacred ministry of this local Church, we are honored to serve under his pastoral care.

Gate of Heaven Cemetery
Honoring Life on Sacred Ground



Acknowledgments

Before 1948, Gate of Heaven Cemetery was farmland that eventually transformed into a beautiful Cemetery, distinguished by its park-like setting and dedicated ministers. Proper acknowledgment must be given to the many dedicated ministers who, over the years, shared the vision of Archbishop John T. McNicholas. From the first interment in 1948 to the present day, we extend our deepest gratitude to those who embraced his vision, comforting thousands of grieving families as they lovingly cared for the burial of the dead. Together then and now we continue..

Honoring Life on Sacred Ground

Special Acknowledgment to current ministers of Gate of Heaven Cemetery.

31 March 2025

Gate of Heaven Cemetery Services Team

Bradley Biggs - Billy Hegener - Kevin Obert - Evan Parmenter - Tyler Rogers - Doug Schaffran
Tim Glynn - Jeff Calvert - Brian Stephenson - Jeff Chandler

Gate of Heaven Operations Team

Valerie Schauer - Kellie Hughes - Karen Laib - Cindy Burke - Dolores Bebko
Carolyn Conrad - Ann Rytel - Pat Williams - Tina Uhlenbrock - Luke Hamilton

Gate of Heaven Outreach Team

Kate Joyce Thesing - Dianne Brown - Deacon Tim Schutte

Gate of Heaven Family Service Advisors

Mario Carder - Josh Crank - Verna Lawhorn - Bobbie Thompson
Jeff Meyrose - Jeanne Young - Cheryl Kelly

Gate of Heaven Finance/ Continuous Improvement

Marty Boswell - Penny Boswell - Robert Cloar - Michelle Hugo

Gate of Heaven Directory of Cemeteries, Archdiocese of Cincinnati

Tom Jordan

