

“A report reached David that the men of Jabesh-gilead had buried Saul. So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh-gilead and said to them: ‘May you be blessed by the Lord for having done this kindness to your lord, Saul, in burying him. And now may the Lord be kind and faithful to you. I too will be generous to you for having done this’” (2 Samuel 2:4-6).

Burying the dead has long been a noble act and serious obligation in our faith tradition. We are blessed here at St. Boniface with many staff members and volunteers who help carry out this important ministry, from the time a family approaches us about purchasing a cemetery plot, through the funeral Mass and luncheon, to the digging and refilling of the grave.

The obligation to bury the dead extends beyond the funeral itself, however. It also includes our obligation to maintain the cemeteries where our beloved dead are buried. Parish cemeteries are sacred ground, and we have an obligation to maintain them with the dignity and care that they deserve. We thank our cemetery committee and the volunteers and staff members who carry out this work in our three parish cemeteries.

As part of their work, the cemetery committee has begun planning for a major restoration and beautification of our three cemeteries, beginning with the original parish cemetery immediately behind the church. This cemetery dates back to the beginning of our parish in the 1850’s, with many of our parish’s founders buried there. Unfortunately, years of neglect have left the cemetery in a state of significant disrepair. The restoration will include removing the three large trees, which have become overgrown and have begun dying and damaging the headstones and graves around them. It will also include resetting, repairing, and, if necessary, replacing the fallen and damaged headstones. To accomplish the latter project, we will need the help of many more volunteers, so we have decided to establish a special task force for this purpose. If you would like to help with this task force, please call Fr. Marc at the parish office. Thank you again to all who help carry out the vital service of burying the dead here at St. Boniface, and please consider helping with that ministry yourself by joining our cemetery restoration task force.