

## Christ Cathedral Memorial Gardens Cemetery Expansion

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**Garden Grove, Calif., (June 26, 2018)** – As part of the transformation underway on the Christ Cathedral campus, the Most Reverend Kevin Vann, Bishop of Orange, will celebrate a blessing and ceremonial groundbreaking for a nearly one-acre expansion of the existing Memorial Gardens Cemetery; July 9 from 6 – 7:30 p.m. Sitting below grade to the east of the glimmering edifice of the Christ Cathedral, now undergoing renovation, the Cathedral Memorial Gardens cemetery is the fourth active cemetery within the Diocese of Orange and is quickly reaching its capacity and must be expanded to meet the future interment needs of the faithful.

“We are blessed as Diocese that Rev. Robert Schuller had the foresight to include a cemetery in his plans for the Crystal Cathedral property. Interment space is increasingly limited within Orange County and having such a serene, solemn and convenient location for families at the heart of our Diocese is a unique gift,” said Bishop Vann.

The Memorial Gardens cemetery, at the heart of the Christ Cathedral campus, will expand with designs that are in keeping with the architectural achievements sitting in close proximity. Georgia-based McCleskey Mausoleum Company has been chosen to lead the expansion effort and is committed to preserving the original design ethic of the cemetery. Cathedral Memorial Gardens is set below the plane of the campus grounds, creating a quiet and intimate setting for prayer and reflection – these elements are enshrined with the expansion. McCleskey Mausoleum Co. also plans a modern and striking Sanctuary of Eternal Life, a new mausoleum and sales office that will feature large doors embellished with glass artwork. “The expansion of Christ Cathedral Memorial Gardens cemetery is designed to promote reflection and prayer,” according to Barry Boudreaux, lead architect of Georgia-based McCleskey Mausoleum Co.

The expansion will also make the cemetery more accessible to those with physical disabilities, with gradual slopes that bring visitors to the lower levels. The expansion will add .87 acres to the current .71-acre, increasing the number of available burial spaces by 6,400. This number includes 4,200 niche spaces and 1,200 lawn spaces. Family estates will also be added.

“It’s really special to have a cathedral with a cemetery right here on the campus,” notes the Very Reverend Christopher Smith, Episcopal Vicar and Rector of Christ Cathedral. “In fact, it’s special for any church because it really harkens back to a former time when it was very customary for churches to have a cemetery. The symbolism of that is beautiful because what we believe is that life in the Lord begins with baptism, which happens in the church and that the final resting place is a symbol of the transition into eternal life. So, the connection between a cemetery and a church is profound. And it is a particular gift that is ours here at the Christ Cathedral Campus.”

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