

A BIT OF HISTORY: ST. PATRICK CEMETERY...



Late Pastor, Fr. Peter P. Dunne, celebrates Mass at St. Patrick Cemetery (c. 1980).



Fr. Dunne and Pollard "Polly" Hanrahan inspect a tombstone dated October 14, 1861.



Damage by vandals to St. Patrick's Cemetery. Photo by Argonne National Laboratory was made Friday, August 25, 1961. Much of the damage occurred between 10:30 p.m. and 1 a.m., August 23-24.

(History taken from the St. Patrick's 140th Anniversary Book) The two acres of farmland for the cemetery were purchased in 1849 by the Chicago Catholic Diocese from Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Mulvey, who are both buried there. On the blueprint of the acquisition of the 3,500 acres of Argonne National Laboratory land, was a cross marking two acres of land known as St. Patrick's Cemetery. It was owned by St. Patrick's Church in Lemont, who was allowed to keep and maintain it. "These are the only two acres the government doesn't have anything to say about," said Polly Hanrahan, sexton at St. Patrick's and caretaker of the cemetery for over 40 years.

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Most of the early settlers who are buried there were born in Ireland, came over in the 1830's and pioneered the farms surrounding the blessed ground. It was these pioneers who built a small log cabin church-school so that the missionaries who journeyed along the DesPlaines Valley (even before the 1830's) could continue saying Mass and teaching the children. According to a newspaper dated March 30, 1879, it was built by Michael Kearney and Nicholas Mulvey, Jr. No longer operating, the school site was later changed to the Argonne area and named the Popelreiter School.

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Unfortunately, as is the case with the other Lemont Catholic Churches, there are no longer any cemetery plots available to incoming parishioners. All plots are currently spoken for and parishioners either must have already "purchased" a plot or must make arrangements with other area cemeteries such as Good Shepherd in Orland Park or Resurrection in Justice. The eventuality of opening up more land adjacent to the cemetery was explored by Fr. Kurt several years ago, and was found to not be an option by the cemetery system.

We indeed have a beautiful cemetery which is now gated. Surrounded by Argonne property, Mass is celebrated here each Memorial Day and attended by many parishioners and visitors who are taken back in time to their childhoods and beyond, remembering honored loved ones; a generous faith-filled generation of souls; the founders of our country and the original stewards of our historic Parish. (Photo to right: May 2012)



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Sunday, October 19th 2014
10am Mass
Followed by a reception at
Cog Hill Country Club

Dinner:
Adults \$40
Children \$15

St. Patrick's
175 Year Anniversary Mass & Dinner
Reservations taken starting in July!