



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

March 2026

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In every age of the Church, the faithful have held sacred the places where our loved ones await the resurrection. Our Catholic cemeteries are not simply parcels of land; they are holy ground, blessed by prayer, sustained by tradition, and shaped by faith that death does not have the final word.

When we walk among the graves or visit mausoleums of our family members and loved ones, we step into the heart of the Church's most consoling truth: "But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him" (Rom 6:8). We also hear the Lord's own promise: "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live" (Jn 11:25).

These words are a source of strength in times of sorrow and loss.

These resting places stand as quiet but powerful witnesses to our hope in the Risen Lord. They remind us that every human life—no matter how long or brief—is precious in the eyes of God. Saint John Paul II said, "The Risen Christ gives hope to the world" (Euch. Concel., 24 Apr 1981).

Because of this hope, we care for our cemeteries with love and respect.

Our Catholic cemeteries serve the community with compassion, dignity, and reverence. They are places where grief can be held gently, where memories can be treasured, and where faith can be renewed. They invite us to pray for those who have gone before us and to entrust them again to God's mercy. In visiting these sacred grounds, we proclaim our belief in the Communion of Saints, that beautiful mystery in which the living and the dead remain united in Christ's love.

I encourage you, whenever possible, to visit our cemeteries—to reflect, to pray, where we are reminded that our earthly journey is always directed toward God, who is the beginning and the fulfillment of every human story. May these places of rest continue to speak of our gratitude for the lives entrusted to our care and of our steady faith in the resurrection.

May the Lord, who is our hope and our peace, bless you and your families. And may our departed loved ones intercede for us as we continue on our pilgrimage of life and faith.

Sincerely in Christ,

† *Joseph Dabrowski*, CSMA

Most Rev. Joseph Dabrowski CSMA
Bishop of Hamilton

/cd