

Holy Cross Mausoleum expansion enables improved services for grieving families

Edmonton Catholic Cemeteries has completed a major expansion to Holy Cross Cemetery and Mausoleum, expanding space, adding an administration building, and planning a new memorial garden.

At roughly \$9 million, it's the largest addition to the Holy Cross site in two decades.

"We're meeting an increased demand because our city is expanding and growing, and also for our families in the mausoleum who want to be in the same place where their relatives and family members are, it will give them the opportunity to be able to be buried there in the future," said Roxanne Burton, manager of [Edmonton Catholic Cemeteries](#).



Roxanne Burton

"It's very comforting and hopeful that families will be able to have a place to bury their loved ones' remains and a beautiful place to come to pray and reflect on their loved ones' lives."

The expansion began in 2017 and the new building space was completed this week. It includes a 1,000-square-metre expansion to the mausoleum with the second floor available for future development, a 754-square-metre administration building, and a covered link between the two.

The expansion creates space for 113 crypts and an additional 205 caskets, as well as 749 niches for urns.

Burton said the expansion comes at a time when Holy Cross Mausoleum has an acute need for space.

“We have almost no crypts currently available in the existing mausoleum, so we did the expansion to be able to offer this service to more people in our Archdiocese, same things with the niches – we’re running out of space,” she said.

Niche spaces will also be available in the new Good Shepherd memorial garden to be completed on the Holy Cross grounds this summer. The garden will include a concrete sidewalk and a statue of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. It will be built between the new administration building and the expansion of the mausoleum.

The mausoleum expansion includes a sanctuary, an altar for monthly masses after COVID-19 crowd restrictions are lifted, and space for administration so that cemeteries advisers can meet with client families. Prior to the expansion, staff were working in a small office area and a trailer.

Archbishop Richard Smith said the expansion is a way for the living to honour the dead.

“When I first saw this I was very, very impressed, very, very pleased. We need a spot like this to be beautiful. This is a place where we honour our beloved dead,” Archbishop Smith said after blessing the new site on May 13.

“The Church has always had great, great respect for the body as the temple of the Holy Spirit. As Jesus had been placed in a tomb, and as we follow the example of our Lord, we need to place our mortal remains in a tomb, in an interment in which we are able to show respect, first of all, but also offer that opportunity for those who grieve to come together in the presence of the mortal remains to remember their loved one, to grieve for them, to thank God for the gift they have been in their lives.”