

## **VANCOUVER ORTHODOX CEMETERY PROTOCOLS**

**19082 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Surrey, V3Z 9V2**

**Protocol 1 – VOC Status – version March 2018**

Vancouver Orthodox Cemetery (VOC) is founded by Heritage Gardens Surrey Cemetery Ltd. (HGSC) together with Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Sobor, Vancouver (HRROS), under the ownership of and within the grounds of Heritage Gardens Surrey Cemetery Ltd. (HGSC).

The purpose of the VOC shall be to maintain and keep in good order a burial ground for the interment of deceased Orthodox members, and other deceased persons eligible for interment in accordance with the provisions of these Protocols.

VOC operates on the basis of the following main documents:

**Bylaws** - Refer to Heritage Gardens Surrey Cemetery Ltd. Bylaws

**BPCPA**- Refers to Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act (2004)

[http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/04002\\_00](http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/04002_00)

**CIFSA**- Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Act (2004)

[http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00\\_04035\\_01](http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00_04035_01)

VOC Protocols are in addition to, and do not supersede the HGSC Cemetery Bylaws, Rules or Regulations – see above. VOC Protocols will define specific rules for the VOC cemetery and VOC members. All the protocols could be updated periodically by VOC founders and partners.

The VOC is located within HGSC, at 19082 16th Ave Surrey, British Columbia and its boundaries and plots shall be those described on the surveyed map of the Cemetery (see Protocol 2).

The definitions used in these Protocols could be found in Protocol 3.

The VOC shall be operated in conjunction with the VOC's appointed Operating Committee (OC) – see Prot. 4.

All Rights of Interment in the VOC are purchased through the cemetery Operator, HGSC Ltd., by signing the Right of Interment Agreement between Operator and Interment Right Holder – see the form in Protocol 5.

The lists of parishioners for signing these Agreements will be provided by HRROS or by other parishes after they join VOC project. In other cases people need to apply for taking part in the VOC project directly by sending online or written request to VOC OC. Such requests should be confirmed or declined by VOC OC within 48 hours after receiving the request. When the request is confirmed, the requester is invited for signing Right of Interment Agreement.

The VOC OC shall administer and interpret these Protocols, in compliance with HGSC Ltd.'s By-Laws.

If any person is aggrieved by a decision of the administrators of these Protocols, they shall have the right to appeal to a meeting of the VOC OC. The decision of VOC OC regarding any appeal shall be final, so long as it does not contravene CIFSA, the BPCPA Act or HGSC Bylaws, and current Protocols.

These Cemetery By-Laws are being under work, and may be altered or amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the voting members of the VOC OC, subject to HGSC and HRROS approval.

**Current List of Protocols**

Protocol 1 – VOC Status

Protocol 2 – VOC map

Protocol 3 - Definitions

Protocol 4 - VOC Operating Committee

Protocol 5 - Right of Interment Agreement

Protocol 6 - Orthodox Funeral Services at VOC

Protocol 7 – Decoration of graves

Protocol 8 - Funeral Planning

Protocol 9 – List of Greater Vancouver Orthodox parishes

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

These VOC Cemetery Protocols were prepared by HGSC and HRROS representatives, and accepted at the Annual Parish Meeting of Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Sobor held on March 11, 2018, at which the appropriate quorum was present, each Parish's members have been duly notified, and have become effective on March 11, 2018. They revoke, supplant and replace any and all Cemetery Protocols previously in use.

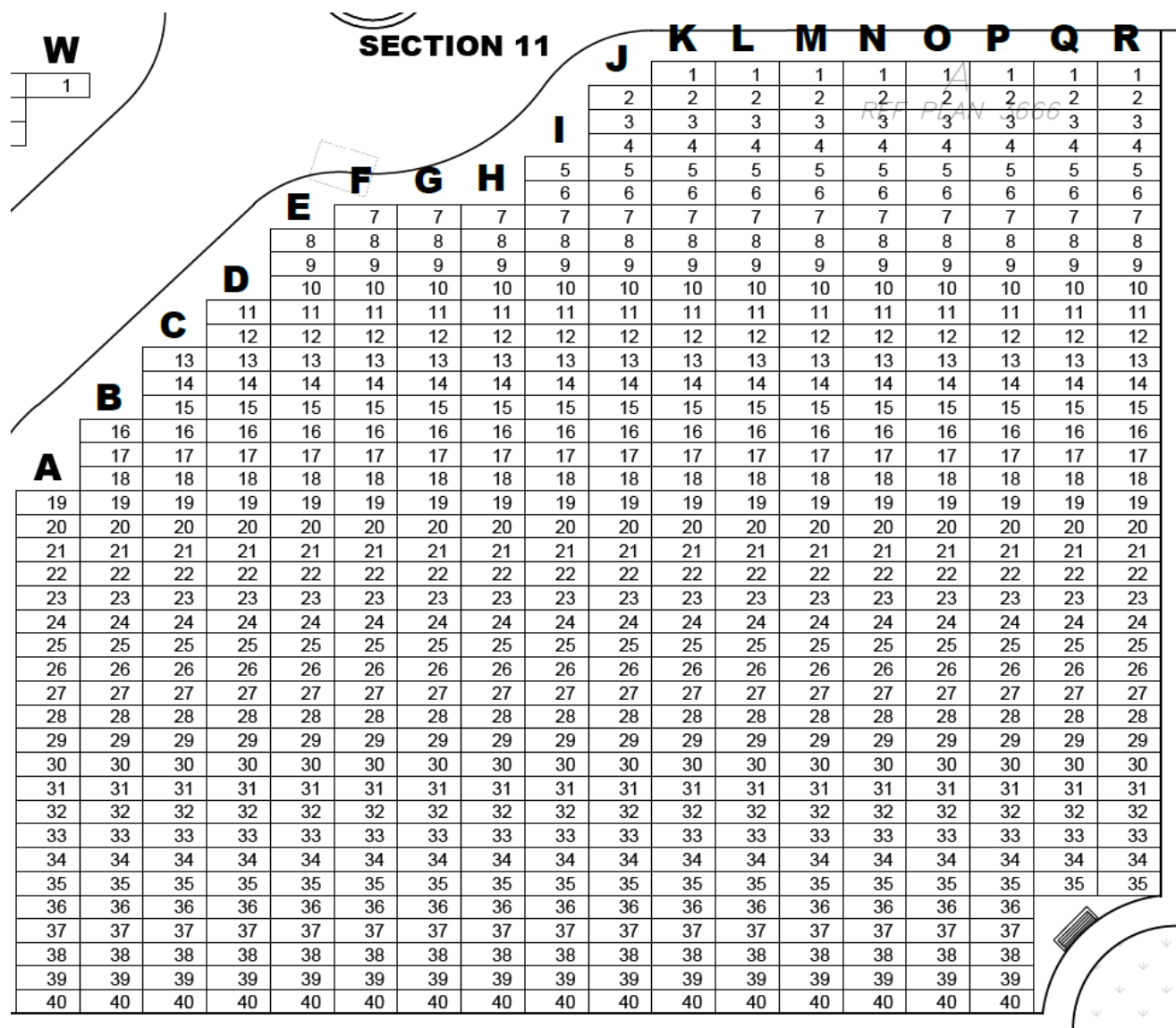
Agreed To:

Very Reverend Father Michael Fourik \_\_\_\_\_

HGSC Representative Trevor Crean \_\_\_\_\_

Dated March 11, 2018

Protocol 2 – VOC map - version March 2018



Protocol 3 – **Definitions** - version March 2018

**VOC**- Vancouver Orthodox Cemetery (see Protocol 1)

**VOC OC** - Vancouver Orthodox Cemetery Operating Committee (see Protocol 4)

**VOC founders** - Heritage Gardens Surrey Cemetery Ltd. & Holy Resurrection Orthodox Sobor, Vancouver

**HGSC** - Refer to Heritage Gardens Surrey Cemetery Ltd

**HRROS** - Holy Resurrection Orthodox Sobor, Vancouver

**VOC partner** – BC Orthodox parish on Joining VOC project.

**Member**- A person belonging to, or in good standing with, one of the partner Canonical Orthodox Churches

**Bylaws** - Refer to Heritage Gardens Surrey Cemetery Ltd. Bylaws

**Schedules to Bylaws** - are integral part of the Bylaws, there are 3 schedules: Schedule A – Fee Schedule; Schedule B – Memorials; Schedule C – Types of Lots

**BPCPA**- Refers to Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act (2004)

[http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/04002\\_00](http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/04002_00)

**CIFSA**- Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Act (2004)

[http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00\\_04035\\_01](http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/00_04035_01)

**Right of Interment Agreement** - means a certificate that provides for the immediate or future right to inter Human Remains or Cremated Remains in a designated Lot. Right of Interment fees include the required contribution to the Maintenance Care Fund – (see Protocol 5)

**Partner Right of Interment** – the Right of Interment Agreement for the plots purchased as parish reserve – (see Protocol 5)

**Administration Fee** means fees levied to cover additional administrative costs associated with the transfer or surrender of a Right of Interment and is not refundable

**Burial Vault** means a protective, sealable outer receptacle, into which a casket or Urn is placed, designed to restrict the entrance of gravesite elements in the casket or Urn

**Caretaker** means the person duly authorized by the Operator to perform Interment and to care for and maintain the Cemetery

**Care and Maintenance** means any work, including, but not limited to, leveling, cutting, mowing, trimming and reconditioning, which is necessary to maintain a lot in keeping with the prevailing standard of maintenance care in the adjacent lots in that area of the cemetery

**Co-Mingled** means the intentional mixing of Cremated Remains of more than one deceased person

**Controlling Person** means, at any given time in regards to particular Human Remains or Cremated Remains,

the person with the right to control the disposition of such remains pursuant to s. 5 of CIFSA

**Cremation Liner** means a receptacle made of durable material placed in a ground cremation Lot to encase an urn, or urns, holding cremated remains. A Cremation Liner has a lid and is placed during the Interment process.

**Crypt** means a chamber of a Mausoleum of sufficient size for entombment of human remains.

**Designate** means a person or class of Family Members whose Human Remains or Cremated Remains are authorized by the Interment Rights Holder to be interred in a Lot

**Family Member** means a parent or stepparent, a grandparent or step-grandparent, a sibling (natural, adopted or step), a Spouse, a child (natural, adopted or step) or a grandchild (natural, adopted, or step)

**Inurnment** means the process of placing Cremated Remains in a receptacle, such as an Urn, and the placement of the receptacle into a Niche

**Niche** means a space, usually within a Columbarium, designed for the Inurnment of Cremated Remains;

**Ossuary** means a receptacle, usually located below ground, for the placement of non-recoverable, Co-mingled Cremated Remains;

**Plot** means a full-size burial Lot, which may accommodate the Interment of up to two caskets, one above the other, and up to 8 Cremated Remains;

**Regulation** means the *Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Regulation* (British Columbia);

**Scattering** means the non-recoverable dispersal of Cremated Remains over a body of land or water within a defined area of a Cemetery

**Urn** means any receptacle, temporary or permanent, used for the encasement of Cremated Remains.

**CARE FUND** means an irrevocable trust fund established, held and administered in accordance with Part 7 of CIFSA for the purpose of financing the future maintenance and care of a Cemetery once all Lots are occupied or reserved, and contribution calculated as prescribed in Part 20 of the CIFSA Regulation.

**HANDLING FEE** means the fee paid for handling of cemetery products not purchased from Heritage Gardens Cemeteries Inc.

**LOT** means a Lot designated, and appropriately sized, in the approved Cemetery plan for the interment of adult remains.

**PREMIUM LOT** means a Lot that has been designated in the approved Cemetery plan as having a different pricing structure due to unique location benefits and limited supply, as determined by the Administrator.

**PREPARATION & PLACEMENT** means the process of completing an Interment including, but not limited to, administrative, legal, labour and equipment resources provided to facilitate the opening of a Lot, disposition of Human Remains or Cremated Remains and the subsequent closing of the Lot.

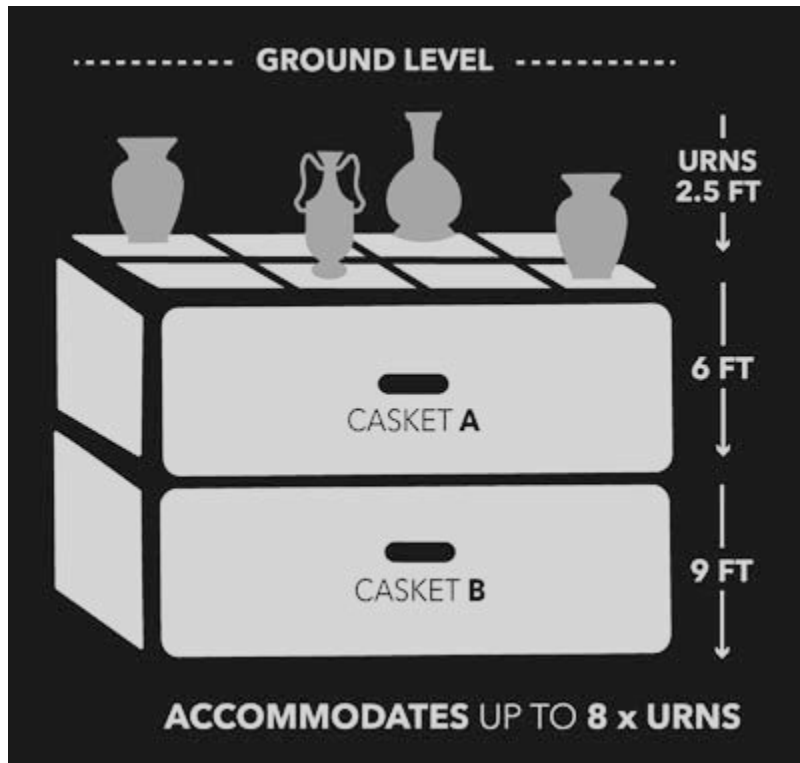
**BASE** means the lowest portion of a memorial set on a foundation;

**DIE** means the upper portion(s) of a memorial placed above the base;

**FLAT MEMORIAL** means continuous monument grade granite, engraved or bronze, memorial set flush with the ground;

**FOUNDATION** means a continuous granite pad, polished top with sawn edges, set at grade, and that supports a memorial (die and base).

Each burial plot at VOC can accommodate two caskets and up to eight cremated remains.



Protocol 4 – **VOC Operating Committee** - version March 2018

The VOC Operating Committee will consist of the cemetery representative, representatives of the HRROS, and representatives of each of the partner churches who will join the VOC project later.

The VOC OC members will be appointed by HRROS at Annual meeting, or by the church council. It will be good practice to have the deputy parish representative at OC for the periods of absence of the main representative.

Any new Church wishing to participate in the VOC must apply to- and receive- permission from the Operating Committee in writing. The same goes for any individual who wishes to join the OC on behalf of their church.

The main duties of VOC OC will be:

- supervising the fulfillment of all HGSC Cemetery Bylaws, Rules or Regulations, and the current VOC Protocols
- helping VOC members with registration, requests for planning services and infrastructural upgrades
- making decisions on all current organizational requests
- publishing updates on the HGSC Cemetery Bylaws, Rules or Regulations, and the current VOC Protocols on the website
- publishing all administrative information and current prices for buying plots and services.
- organizing Annual meetings of VOC members and voting when necessary

**VANCOUVER ORTHODOX CEMETERY PROTOCOLS**

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**Protocol 5 – Right of Interment Agreement - version March 2018**

1. The Right of Interment Agreement is purchased through the cemetery operator, HGSC Ltd s, for personal use or as a parish reserve. Each such document should contain the information on the Right holder/purchaser, Designated Right holder (if not purchaser), Additional persons names to be interred in a Plot, the cemetery section name (VOC), Plot location, sum of the purchase and date with signatures. Each document is for one plot only.  
This document is signed in two examples, one for the Right holder/purchaser, one for the HGSC.
2. Additional persons' names section could contain exact names or phrases like:  
Family Member - Children and Grandchildren.  
My Siblings and their spouses or Children.
3. Each VOC partner (parish) may purchase a Right of Interment in the VOC for several plots with receiving Partner Right of Interment documents. These rights could serve as a parish reserve for future members.  
The VOC partner will send request(s) in paper or electronic format to VOC OC for updating the Right of Interment for exact previously purchased plot(s). VOC OC will send back the Updated Right of Interment for these plot(s) in the name of exact Right holders. There will be no administration fees for issuing the initial Right of Interment for former VOC partner plots.
4. To prevent strangers to be buried on the VOC section, all purchased plots will remain forever with the corresponding Orthodox community, like Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Sobor, or another parish (after joining the project). This means that if any Right holder could donate his/her plot to the corresponding community (see previous point). Such plots will go to the corresponding parish reserve with further finding new Right holder.

Please see the form of the Right of Interment Agreement below.



CREATING COMMUNITY LEGACY

## **VANCOUVER ORTHODOX CEMETERY**

### **RIGHT OF INTERMENT**

Place of interment license no. 72611

Right Transfer No.

Agreement and order made \_\_\_\_\_, 2018 between Operator and Interment Right Holder set out below.

Cemetery: **Heritage Gardens Surrey Cemetery Ltd., 19082 16 Avenue, Surrey BC V3Z 9V2 ph: 604 227 2208**

Operator: Heritage Gardens Surrey Cemetery Ltd., place of interment license no. 72611

**ELIGIBILITY:**

1. All Rights of Interment in the VOC are purchased through the cemetery operator, HGSC Ltd.
2. No person may purchase a Right of Interment outside of a VOC Signup Day without the written permission of the VOC Operating Committee.

The right of interment is granted in accordance with *Cremation, Interment and Funeral Services Act* (CIFSA) and its regulations, the *Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act* ("BPCPA") and its regulations, and the Operator's Bylaw no. 1 (the "Bylaw"), a full copy of which are available upon request.

**1. INTERMENT RIGHT HOLDER/PURCHASER**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Section: VOC

Type of Lot: Full Burial Lot Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. RIGHT of INTERMENT FEE & TAXES**

Fee: Right of Interment - VOC  
(including 25% care fund contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_)

GST: \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL** .....**INTERMENT RIGHT HOLDER**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*Interment Right Holder acknowledges and agrees to conditions 5-13 on the accompanying 2 pages.*

Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**3. DESIGNATE INTERMENT RIGHT HOLDER (IF NOT PURCHASER)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Province: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. ADDITIONAL INTERMENT INFORMATION (PLOTS):**

The Interment Right Holder may authorize the Human Remains or Cremated Remains of additional persons [**Family Members**] to be interred in a Plot, by naming such persons below or naming a class of the Family Members (defined in the Bylaw):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Per: Heritage Gardens Surrey Cemetery Ltd.

Print: \_\_\_\_\_



item 3 on page 1 of this Agreement under the caption "Designate for Interment in Lot (if not Interment Right Holder)", provided:

- (a) The Interment Right Holder makes the request for a transfer in writing;
- (b) the Transfer Fee is paid

#### **9. Construction of Structure**

An Interment Right Holder who wishes to construct a family mausoleum or columbarium on contiguous vacant and unreserved Lots for the exclusive use of the Interment Right Holder and their Designate(s) must apply to the Operator for a contract. Both design and construction are subject to the Operator and VOC Operating Committee approval.

#### **10. Exclusive Section for VOC**

The Cemetery has, by agreement with the Vancouver Orthodox Cemetery Operating Committee, reserved this section of the Cemetery to be used exclusively for the Interment and/or Inurnment of their members. No person may purchase a Right of Interment in the reserved section without the written acknowledgement of the VOC Operating Committee.

#### **11. Reclamation**

In accordance with s. 25 of the CIFSA Regulation, upon approval of the director, Business Practices and Consumer Protection Authority of British Columbia, a Right of Interment may be reclaimed by the Operator where the Lot has not been used, but only if:

- (a) the Interment Right Holder would be at least 90 years of age;
- (b) a period of at least 50 years has elapsed from the date of Right of Interment purchase;
- (c) a minimum 90 days has passed since the Operator sent notice to the last known address of the Interment Holder setting out its intention to reclaim the Right of Interment and the Operator has not received a response; and
- (d) the Operator has made diligent attempts to contact the Interment Right Holder but has not been able to locate or contact the Interment Right Holder.

#### **12. Entire Agreement**

This Agreement contains all representations, terms and promises between the parties and may not be varied by any oral statement of either party. The purchaser acknowledges that they have received and understand the HGSC Ltd. Cemetery Bylaws \_\_\_\_\_ (initial)

#### **13. Enurement**

This Agreement will continue to benefit and be binding upon the parties hereto and their respective heirs, executors, administrators, successors and permitted assigns.

In witness whereof, the parties have signed this Agreement in \_\_\_\_\_, British Columbia on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2018.

**5. Entitlement.**

This Agreement, upon payment of Lot Fees and taxes, entitles the Interment Right Holder to have the human remains or cremated remains of each designated person interred in the Cemetery. This Right of Interment does not vest the Interment Right Holder any title or interest in the land or in a particular burial plot. The Right of Interment is subject to the Bylaw and the rules and regulations of the Operator in effect at the date of this Agreement and as they may be amended from time to time hereafter. Payment in full is due upon signing of Agreement. The fee set forth above is in payment of the Right of Interment only, and does not include fees for preparation and placement of remains, cemetery products, or other charges. Please see the attached fee schedule. THIS IS A CONTRACT TO WHICH BPCPA APPLIES.

**6. Future Lot(s).** The Operator is currently developing the VOC section. The Lot(s) will be completed between **APRIL 15 and APRIL 30, 2018**. The right of interment may be exercised commencing **MAY 1, 2018**. In the event interment is required before then, Heritage Gardens reserves the right to offer a full and complete refund to the Right Holder (less the care fund 25% after 15 days from execution of this agreement by both parties), or (if available) give the Right Holder the option to inter the human or cremated remains in another vacant lot in the cemetery temporarily, until the Right Holder's lot becomes available.

**6. Rights of Refund and Surrender**

The Operator will provide the Interment Right Holder a copy of this Agreement within 15 days of execution by both parties. The Interment Right Holder may cancel this Agreement, and receive a full refund, by giving notice of cancellation on or before the date that is 15 days following receipt of this Agreement. The Interment Right Holder need not provide a reason for cancellation.

Following such 15<sup>th</sup> day, the Operator may, at its discretion, accept the surrender of a Right of Interment in exchange for a refund of the original Fees paid, less the contribution to the Care Fund, provided:

- (a) the Interment Right Holder provides written notice to the Cemetery of intention to surrender the Right; and
- (b) the Interment Right Holder pays the administration fee in respect of the transfer, together with any fees associated with the removal of any Memorial or adornments on the surrendered Lot.

**\*6. Rights of Refund or Surrender are extended for Holy Resurrection Members to May 1, 2018, at no additional cost. Refunds/Surrenders during this period are not subject to an administration fee.**

**7. Plot Capacity & Subsequent Interments**

The Operator will permit the Interment of up to two caskets and up to eight cremated remains (which maximum applies even if there are no caskets interred in a plot), on any plot. The Operator will permit the interment of human remains or cremated remains of designates at the direction of the Interment Right Holder (or their Control Person in the event the Right Holder is deceased), in accordance with item 4 of this Agreement, and at the direction of the person with the right to control the disposition of the human remains or cremated remains under CIFSA ("Control Person"). The Operator will be entitled to rely on the direction of the Interment Right Holder or their Control Person in respect of carrying out subsequent interments into the Plot, and will not be required to seek the consent of the Control Person of all deceased whose human remains or cremated remains are interred in a given plot.

**8. Restrictions on Transfer**

An Interment Right Holder may only designate one Lot for the Interment Right Holder's own Interment. Following execution of this Agreement, an Interment Right Holder may add or remove family members, or change the description of a class of family members, listed under item 4 on page 1 of this Agreement under the caption "Additional Interment Information (Plots)", on payment of an administration fee. **(Note \*6 Exemption)**

For all other transfers, including transfer of the Right of Interment to another individual within the Orthodox community, or a change to or from the designation of the Lot for Interment Right Holder's own interment (see

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Protocol 6 – **Orthodox Funeral Traditions** - version March 2018

### **Beliefs Regarding Death**

Orthodox Christians commonly believe that salvation is achieved through living holy, Christ-like lives. The death leads to the separation of the body from the soul. They believe that when Christ comes again to the world, final judgement will be delivered to each soul which would result in it spending an eternity in either Heaven or Hell.

Orthodox Christians ask God for “The Christian death, a painless, shameless, peaceful, and kind answer at the Last Judgment Court of Christ”.

Even though the church prays for the deceased’s soul, great respect is paid to the body. The Christian’s body is considered sacred because it was the Temple of the Holy Spirit. Plus, the body shares in the final restoration of all creation.

Remember that a funeral is a crucial moment, during which it is worth keeping all the necessary requirements. The most important is to enable the soul to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

### **The grave of a Christian**

The grave and gravestone of a Christian should be arranged simply and modestly and serve two purposes - to show other Christians that their faithful were buried here, and to keep his name for the descendants.

The deceased is supposed to face east, as a sign of his faith in the Resurrection of Christ and as if awaiting a general uprising of the dead. And above the grave, at the feet of the deceased, the symbol of our salvation is delivered - the Honest and Life-giving Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **When Orthodox funerals do not happen**

The most suitable day for burial is considered the third day after death.

Orthodox funerals do not happen Sunday’s and on the following church feast days: Nativity of Christ, Holy Week, Pascha, as well as the other major feast days. Ask your priest for more details - he will give you advice on how to proceed.

### **Choosing clothes for diseased**

If the deceased held clerical role in the Church, he should be dressed in the appropriate robes by other clergy. Laity should be buried in civilian clothes, military, fire and police officers in uniform.

For men: a classical suit of reserved tones, a shirt, underwear, socks, shoes or slippers and a tie (optional).

Women's clothing: a scarf, dress, underwear, shoes or slippers and tights or stockings. The advantage is given to the garb of light tones.

The clothes of unmarried women can consist of: wedding dress, veil, shoes, linen.

### **About Cremation**

The Orthodox Faith is strict when it comes to burying it's dead and try to avoid alternative methods of dealing with the deceased such as cremation.

Local tradition: a person who is to be cremated is not permitted to be brought to the church for a funeral (some priests may bend this rule), any gathering or prayer service by family should take place at the funeral home. Cremated remains are not permitted to be brought into a church building

### **Death by suicide**

Death by suicide is not recognized by the Church, and those who commit suicide may not have an Orthodox funeral. Suicides stop being Orthodox, and are buried outside the Orthodox cemetery section. If the person owed a plot, relatives need to buy a plot in another place, or it needs to be exchanged to another cemetery section with the help of the Operating Committee. The following exceptions are recognised by Orthodox Church in America:

- People with mental illness (relatives need to show a certificate of registration in the psychiatric hospital of the deceased).
- People whose deaths cause suspicion of committing a violent death over them, which they wanted to pass off for suicide.
- Precisely unclear reasons for the death of a person.

Once a year on the great feast of Pentecost, the day of the descent of the Holy Spirit, the Church prays even for suicides, pleading that this is so—that love is stronger than death, even when it is self-inflicted.

### **Approaching death**

When an Orthodox Christian is approaching death, a priest should be brought in to hear the final confession and administer Holy Communion to the dying person.

After the death, the priest will lead those present in prayers for the release of the soul.

**Before An Orthodox Funeral**

The funeral should be carefully planned.

The first step in the Eastern Orthodox funeral tradition is preparing the body, which includes washing and clothing the body. Family and close friends traditionally have performed this act with a priest present and are encouraged to still do this. Once the body is bathed and dressed, it is ready to be placed in the casket. The priest will sprinkle holy water on all four sides of the casket and then the body will be placed inside.

Once the body has been properly prepared, the priest will then begin the First Panikhida, a prayer service for the deceased. This marks the beginning of the wake. The wake may last until the body is brought to the church for the funeral service. Traditionally, the wake lasts three days, though it has come to last only one evening. During the wake, the Psalter (Book of Psalms) is read aloud by family and friends and subsequent Panikhidas are performed.

Singers or the church quire could be invited for the funeral ceremony.

**Three Services**

The Orthodox funeral generally consists of three Services.

- The first is the vigil service, or the Trisagion, which is usually performed at the church the night before the funeral day and on anniversaries of the person's death. If the family wishes, the Trisagion may be performed at a funeral home. In the service, the prayers entreat God to grant rest to the departed soul so that it may receive mercy.
- The Funeral Service should occur at the Church, where the body is brought on the day of burial. The Funeral Service may be served after or as a part of the Divine Liturgy.
- The Trisagion Service is performed at the graveside at the cemetery.

**The funeral service at the church**

After the wake, the body is transported to the church for the funeral service. Traditionally, this transportation takes the form of a procession led by the cross. Once at the church, the coffin is placed in the middle of the church, it is usually open during all the service.

Near the head of the coffin should be placed a bowl of koliva, a dish of boiled wheat with honey, with a lit candle on top, symbolizing the cyclical nature of life and the sweetness of Heaven. A crown or wreath with the Trisagion printed on it is placed on the head and a small icon of Christ, the deceased's patron saint, or a cross is placed in the deceased's hand or in the casket. Lit candles should be distributed to all present and should remain lit throughout the funeral service.

A remembrance given by a close friend or family member honors the life and gifts of the deceased.

After the service, mourners are encouraged to approach the casket and “say goodbye” to the deceased, and may kiss the icon or cross in the casket. The casket is closed and removed from the church to the cemetery. At this point, the Trisagion should again be sung.

### **The graveside funeral service**

When possible, cast spruce branches along the way to the cemetery so as not to bring back death into the house.

After the prayers are done, the graveside service is conducted, then those attending are offered the opportunity to place flowers or sand on the casket before the deceased is interred to the earth.

### **Post-Funeral Reception**

Following the funeral service, after the body is buried, family and friends gather for a reception, where mourners can connect with each other, reflect on the life of the deceased, and eat a meal, called a “mercy meal.”

### **Mournig and Memorializing the Dead**

The mourning period for Orthodox Christians lasts for forty days. Within those forty days, the third day, the ninth day, and the fortieth day all have special significance. After forty days, memorials are celebrated at three months, six months, nine months, one year, and on the anniversary of the death for at least seven years. For close relatives, the mourning period may last for one year, during which widows and widowers may choose to wear only black clothing and will recite Panikhidas regularly. Close relatives may also stay home from work for one week and avoid social gatherings for some time.

Memorial services are held on the Sunday closest to the fortieth day after the death.

The grave of the deceased is usually visited by close friends and family members on specific days such as the ninth day and the fortieth day after death, on the anniversary of the death, and birthdays. Memorial services and blessing the grave are held by the priest.

The priest is also invited for Memorial service and blessing the grave on the first Sunday after Pascha. This special day of memorizing the dead is called Radonitza or St. Thomas Sunday.

### Attending the funeral

In North America, many churches have pews, and non-Orthodox visitors must pay attention to determine when to sit and stand and participate in the service. It is very important to stand during the Gospel reading, the entrances of the priests, when the priest gives a blessing and the dismissal at the conclusion of the service.

Attendees of the funeral are expected to dress in a specific manner, often dark and somber clothing for women and dark jackets with ties for men.

Guests at the funeral service often greet the families of the deceased and provide their condolences by saying the phrase “memory eternal” or “may their memory be eternal” or “may you have an abundant life”.

Photographing the deceased in the casket, unless the family has asked you to do so, is generally considered in very poor taste.

If there is a registry or guestbook, be sure to sign it with your first and last names and, if appropriate, your relationship to the deceased.

Children old enough to understand death also should understand the purpose of a funeral and be allowed to ask questions before or after the service and to work through their grief.

Help in the form of financial assistance must be done discreetly with the help of the priest. It is generally inappropriate to approach the family and offer cash directly.

### Funeral Burial Forehead Strip



**Slavonic Practice** (usually not accepted by western parishes)

Attendees of the funeral are expected to always bring an even number of flowers and place them next to the coffin.

Deceased could not be buried with engagement ring. In addition, it is also worth removing all jewelry, as this can attract the attention of marauders.

After death it is necessary to look at the fact that both eyes are closed. Sometimes they are put on coins, which prevent muscle spasm. Then they are taken away.

The mirrors at home are opened after the funeral. It is generally accepted on day 9, but if a person doubts, the best option is to withstand 40 days.

Relatives cannot carry the coffin with the deceased.

You cannot use a red color at a funeral.

#### **Local parishes Practice** (usually not used by Slavonic parishes)

Items in the casket:

... Other items that might be thought to provide the deceased such as a neck cross, rings, jewellery, hand cross, icons and other items need to be reviewed by the priest prior to being buried with the deceased.

Choosing clothes for deceased:

... if a person was baptized into the church as an adult, the person's baptismal robes should be worn.

The funeral service at the church:

... After the service, mourners are encouraged to approach the casket and "give a last kiss" to the deceased, kissing the deceased, icon or cross in the casket.



### Our Lord Jesus Christ,

by His divine grace, as also by the gift  
and power vouchsafed unto His holy Disciples  
and Apostles, that they should bind  
and loose the sins of men:  
(for He said unto them, "Receive the Holy Spirit:  
Whosoever sins you remit, they are remitted,  
and whosoever sins you retain,  
they are retained. And whatsoever  
you shall bind or loose upon earth  
shall be bound or loosed also in heaven").

By that same power, also, transmitted unto us  
from them, this my spiritual child .....  
is absolved through me, unworthy though I be,  
from all things wherein, as mortal, he (she) has  
sinned against God, whether in word, or deed,  
or thought, and with all his (her) senses,  
whether voluntary or involuntary, whether with  
knowledge or through ignorance. If he (she) be  
under the ban or excommunication of a Bishop,  
or a Priest, or has sinned by any oath, or has been bound,  
as man, by any sins whatsoever, but has  
repented him (her) thereof, with contrition of heart:  
he (she) is now absolved from all those faults and bonds.

May all those things which have proceeded from  
the weakness of his (her) mortal nature be consigned  
to oblivion, and be remitted unto him (her):

Through His loving-kindness, through the  
prayers of our most holy, blessed, and glorious Lady,  
the Mother of our Lord and ever-virgin Mary,  
of the holy, glorious, and all-laudable Apostles,  
and of all the Saints.

Amen.

### **Protocol 7 – Decoration of graves - version March 2018**

The HGSC Cemetery Rules and Regulations (BY-LAW) govern the decoration of graves, and Schedule B to BY-LAW. This protocol contains the detailed rules for VOC section of the cemetery.

1. Each interment (plot) shall be suitably identified by placing of a suitable identification marker (engraving on a currently installed monument, new monument or foot stone) within a one-year period. The Cemetery Operator will provide a temporary marker once the Memorial Installation Permit is applied for and fee paid.
2. Anyone interred in the VOC may use the monument dealer of their choice once the Permit is applied for and paid. HGSC reserves the right to use their own staff and equipment for installation, at a cost no greater than the other company's installation fee.
3. Monuments must adhere to the HGSC Bylaws, Schedule B, and must NOT be engraved or shaped in any manner contrary to the tradition of the Orthodox Church. They must be placed on a suitable foundation. Concrete bases are not permitted.  
On the bases of the parish survey there will be prepared several variants of recommended monuments from simple stone base to Upright markers, with vase for live flowers. All the installations should allow the efficient maintenance of the grounds.
4. The project documentation for non-standard markers should obtain VOC OC confirmation. The VOC OC has authority of final approval or rejection. It is imperative that they be consulted in advance, during design stage, if there is any potential conflict that may arise from the design or installation of a memorial.
5. The VOC Operating Committee shall have the authority to direct the use of multiple plots for the families.
6. The Interment Right Holder, or the deceased's descendants, is required to keep in proper repair, at their expense and to the satisfaction of the Cemetery, all Memorials upon their Lot.
7. Only flower containers, supplied by the Cemetery and installed by the Caretaker, or approved by the Operator shall be allowed and set in each Lot, except those vases that are part of an approved Memorial.

The Protocol is under development

### **Protocol 8 – Funeral Planning**

The Protocol is under development

Protocol 9 – **List of Greater Vancouver Orthodox parishes** - version March 2018

Holy Resurrection Russian Orthodox Sobor (OCA)  
St. Herma's of Alaska Church, Langley (OCA)  
St. John of Shanghai Orthodox Church (OCA)  
All Saints of North America Monastery, Dewdney (OCA)  
Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church, Vancouver (ROCOR)  
St. Nickolas church, Vancouver (ROCOR)  
Holy Trinity Cathedral, Vancouver (UOCC)  
St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church  
St. Archangel Michael Serbian Orthodox Church  
St. George Greek Orthodox Cathedral  
St. Nicholas & Dimitrios Greek Orthodox Church  
Saints Constantine and Helen Greek Orthodox Church  
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Mary  
Holy Trinity Church, Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of America  
Holy Nativity Antiochian Orthodox Church