



Cemetery Management Initiative

A program to help dioceses grow revenue and enhance their cemetery ministry

Catholic Extension and Catholic Management Services (CMS) have teamed up to offer a customized sales training program to help mission dioceses across the nation improve the outreach and financial aspects of their cemeteries.

In a survey of mission dioceses, Catholic Extension found that over 85% of parish and diocesan cemeteries operate at a loss. Furthermore, over 67% of respondents felt that the faithful in their diocese were not well educated on the importance of Catholic cemeteries, Catholic funeral traditions, and Catholic cremation options.

Through this partnership Catholic Extension and CMS are offering access to the Mission Acceleration Program, created by CMS, in order to help mission dioceses convert their cemetery operations from a financial burden into a revenue generator. A healthy cemetery system that is producing revenue can strengthen the overall financial health of the diocese, as well as fully serve their population in keeping with Catholic traditions through all aspects of their life.

Catholic Management Services is a church-owned nonprofit organization, founded in 2011, that has developed proven programs that help build a sustainable funeral and cemetery model within the Catholic Church. CMS has worked with 16 dioceses across the United States, including 8 mission dioceses, helping to increase cemetery gross revenues by a two-year growth rate of 76%-120% in client dioceses.

The CMS Mission Acceleration Program offers a formal, customized sales training curriculum, supplemented by a single point of contact, to consult on sales-related issues: hiring/onboarding, compensation, reporting, coaching and others. It is designed to boost overall gross sales with a clear vision on the mission of Catholic cemeteries.

In order to fully take advantage of the opportunities in this initiative, Catholic Extension and CMS recommend that a prospective diocese have at least 2 family-facing employees, and an annual revenue of at least \$500,000. Applicants not meeting these numbers can be considered, but may not be the best candidates for final selection.

Program Details

This innovative training program is designed to drive outreach with the benefit of increased overall gross sales and provide clearer vision on the mission of the Catholic Cemeteries.

By focusing on making the ministry more proactive rather than reactive, the CMS Mission Acceleration Program engages staff and leadership teams through specialized, on-site, hands-on programs that will increase advanced planning sales performance and strengthen overall family service.

The Mission Acceleration Program consists of four distinct training courses (see attached schedule):

- **Pre-Need Sales Skills:** An intensive classroom experience covering the fundamentals of the sales process.
- **Phone Skills:** A hands-on classroom experience, focused on outbound appointment-setting skills
- **Presentation Skills:** A course in presenting your brand the proper way to interested families
- **Referral & Follow-Up Skills:** A course that covers referral requests and follow-up

A dedicated Regional Training Director with proven sales experience will lead the courses and engage with each staff member on an individual level. The program is customizable, so it will directly relate to each diocese's specific set of circumstances. Courses are delivered in ways that offer scheduling flexibility and ensure that cemetery locations are never understaffed. Each training cycle will be scheduled to repeat every eight to nine months. **After utilizing the Mission Acceleration Program, a diocese can see up to a 70% increase in appointment-setting ratios and a 25% increase in overall sales profitability.**

Sales training courses are delivered individually to your diocese, and include classroom as well as observational coaching. It is a two-year program that runs in cycles, in order to include new employees and keep the lessons reinforced. In this initiative, the diocese commits to two years of assistance, to ensure that the necessary changes have been implemented properly among the staff.

Expected Contributions & Responsibilities of Each Party:

1. Catholic Management Services:

Financial: Catholic Management Services will provide an investment of \$48,000 annually to each diocese participating in this initiative.

Programmatic: Catholic Management Services will be responsible for the customization and delivery of the Mission Acceleration Program to each mission diocese selected for participation. This will include the assignment of a Regional Training Director as a primary point of contact for the diocese. This is a professional who gets to know the team on an individual basis, understands their strengths and weaknesses, guides them through our training process, then evaluates and coaches them as necessary. The training director is with the team on a monthly basis working through a set of training courses.

2. Catholic Extension:

Financial: Catholic Extension will provide an investment of \$48,000 to each diocese participating in this initiative in year one, and \$33,500 in year two.

Communication: Catholic Extension will be responsible for communicating this initiative, and its terms and conditions, to the mission dioceses.

3. Diocese:

Financial: The diocese will provide an investment of \$48,000 in year one of in this initiative, and \$62,500 in year two. The diocese will pay the yearly funding received from Catholic Extension to Catholic Management Services as a part of their annual fees.

Tactical: The diocese will commit to two years of partnership with CMS. In order to be considered for this initiative, a diocese must commit to full participation of all cemetery staff in the training courses and program requirements as outlined by CMS.

Financial Details of Partnership

The Cemetery Revenue Growth Initiative will cover two-thirds of the overall cost of the program in year one. The diocese is responsible for the remaining one-third. As diocesan revenues increase, a higher portion of the costs will be paid in year two. This program is priced in order for cemetery systems to recover the cost with just the first handful of additional sales each month that they'll gain from utilizing the program.

Contributors	Year 1	Year 2
Catholic Extension	\$48,000	\$33,500
Catholic Management Services	\$48,000	\$48,000
Diocese	\$48,000	\$62,500
Total	\$144,000	\$144,000

In the unlikely event that your diocese has not yet recovered your program costs by the beginning of year two, Catholic Extension would maintain a grant sponsorship of \$48,000 (instead of \$33,500) for the second year of this initiative.

Sample Schedule of Initiative Participation

Month 1:	Pre-Need Sales Skills, classroom training
Month 2:	On-site coaching in diocese by Regional Training Director
Month 3:	Phone Skills, classroom training
Month 4:	On-site coaching in diocese by Regional Training Director
Month 5:	Presentation Skills, classroom training and on-site coaching
Month 6:	On-site coaching in diocese by Regional Training Director
Month 7:	Referral and Follow-up Skills, classroom training
Month 8:	On-site coaching in diocese by Regional Training Director

Full program and courses repeat in months 9-16 and 17-24 to include new employees and reinforce lessons learned.

Timeline of Initiative Participation

June 9, 2015	Announcement of initiative availability
July 17, 2015	Deadline for applications from dioceses
August 2015	Decisions communicated to applicant dioceses
September 2015	Catholic Management Services to interview cemetery leadership to determine the program's appropriate final structure
October 2015	Kick-off meeting with staff