



*Thought-partner for Cemetery Directors*

#### **DIOCESE OF SPOKANE**

The Catholic Cemeteries of Spokane in Washington state had a full plate. In some ways, it was an exaggerated set of the circumstances that are common across Catholic cemetery systems. With approximately 720,000 residents in the diocese, fewer than 12% of the population identify as Catholic. Creating further difficulty in this limited market is the end-of-life preferences, with over 75% of the population choosing cremation. So where do Catholic cemeteries fit in?

Catholic Management Services' first twelve months in Spokane were focused on working with Executive Director Jim Falkner to drive revenue, making the cemeteries operationally profitable. This entailed restructuring the family service (sales) department. Our objective was to get energetic individuals out into the community to educate the public on our Catholic tradition and end-of-life options. Additionally, it was vital for the cemeteries to forge deeper relationships with the local parishes. This was achieved through a comprehensive outreach and education program that enabled cemeteries to establish themselves as an extension of the parish.

At the end of the day, it was about Catholic Management Services supporting a Director in achieving his vision.

*“ By partnering with Catholic Management Services, I was able to reduce stress and rely on a team of professionals with experience across all facets of my business. I now have a thought partner helping me set a strategic agenda for the coming decade. In two short years, our ministry has stemmed operating losses, increased advanced planning revenues, and furthered our ministry through a renewed presence in the community. Catholic Management Services played an integral role in the launch of our Catholic cemeteries into the funeral business, which in just a couple months of operations is already exceeding our expectations. ”*

**Jim Falkner**

*Executive Director*

*Catholic Funeral & Cemetery Services of Spokane*