



# Key Moments in St. Peter's History

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*A series of historical highlights from the first 200 years of St. Peter – Libertytown.*

## St. Peter's Cemetery – the 2<sup>nd</sup> One Hundred Years

As mentioned in a previous Key Moment article, *Cemetery – the early years*, Fr. Samuel



*Figure 1 St. Joseph Statue in the "new addition" of the cemetery - about 1920*

Kavanagh took a special interest in beautifying the cemetery grounds during his pastorate.

Pastor from 1902 until his death in 1923, Fr.

was instrumental in creating gardens and

walkways throughout the cemetery – to such a

degree that he drew the attention of the local

and not so local newspapers. When St. Peter's

was referenced in a newspaper article, it was not

uncommon for there to be a corresponding

reference to the Parish having one of the most

beautiful cemeteries in the country. In 1915, the

Baltimore American ran a full page pictorial of

the grounds of St. Peter's, which highlighted the

cemetery, and showed many plantings and

walkways constructed under his direction and

Fr. could often be seen walking the cemetery,

saying his daily office.

In 1918, when our Parish was not quite 100

years old, the cemetery saw its first increase in

size. James M. Sappington (great grandson of

Richard and Catharine Coale), donated land

which became known as the St. Joseph section

of the cemetery. South of the Blessed Mother section, and east of our current and 3<sup>rd</sup> church, the

St. Joseph section was known as the "new addition" in 1918, about the time the statue of St.

Joseph was erected.

In this section is buried 'the deacon with a tape measure', Michael G. Misulia, Sr., his wife Josephine and his parents. After the Church fire in 2004, Deacon Mike determined that by angling the new church building "just so", we could fit a church of the size needed - on the space it now occupies. This eliminated the need to purchase land elsewhere; saving the Parish a

considerable sum of money. One of two deacons serving St. Peter's at that time, Deacon Mike spent 23 years working with the cemetery and its records. He lived to see and participate in the dedication of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Church in 2008 on the land he identified for its construction and his headstone can be seen through the windows of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and current Church.

In 1979, 61 years after the donation of what became the St. Joseph section of the cemetery, parishioners Charles and Mary Unglesbee donated land from their adjacent property, to once again increase the size of the cemetery. According to newspaper accounts, Charles was a steeplejack who, in 1964, repainted and restored the steeple of the 2<sup>nd</sup> church, leafing the cross at the top in 24kt gold. Mary, his wife, was organist for the Parish for many years and was a recipient of the Archdiocesan Medal of Honor along with Deacon Mike, in November 2003. This newest section, located northeast of the original St. Peter's section, is known as the Sacred Heart section. It is identified by a statue of the Sacred Heart, erected in 1987 by Sebastian Grabenstein and his family in the same year that Marguerite Alexandrine, Sebastian's wife, was laid to rest in the cemetery. Both Charles and Mary Unglesbee, who died in 1984 and 2016 respectively, and Marguerite Grabenstein, are buried in this Sacred Heart section.

These are but a few of the many stories of love and selflessness, which earlier parishioners of St. Peter's showed, for the Parish we inherited – and enjoy today.



*Figure 2 Sacred Heart Statue in the Sacred Heart section of the cemetery*