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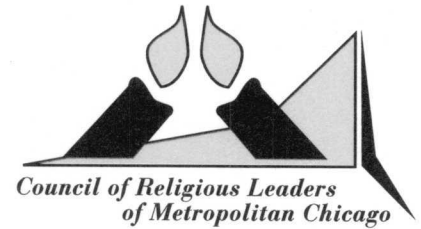
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Chicago
Armenian Orthodox Church
Baptist General Convention of Illinois
Baptist Ministers' Conference of
Chicago and Vicinity
Chicago Board of Rabbis
Christian Church/ Disciples of Christ
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
Church of God in Christ
Church of the Brethren
Council for Islamic Organizations of
Greater Chicago
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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Greek Orthodox Church
Orthodox Church in America
Pentecostal Assemblies of the World
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Reformed Church in America
Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Roman Catholic Church
Salvation Army
Serbian Orthodox Church
Ukrainian Catholic Church
Ukrainian Orthodox Church
Unitarian Universalist Association
United Baptist State Convention
United Church of Christ
United Methodist Church
Catholic Theological Union
Chicago Theological Seminary
Lutheran School of Theology
McCormick Theological Seminary
Meadville-Lombard Theological School
Chicago Center for Cultural Connections
Community Renewal Society



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The criminal acts that have taken place at Burr Oak Cemetery in Alsip, Illinois, are a shocking and terrible revelation of the evil that can at times afflict our community. The disturbance and defilement of the remains of those interred in the cemetery, the indifference to the sensibilities and grief of survivors, and the gross depravity of those involved for the sake of financial gain is a gross sacrilege.

With the community at-large, the members of the Council of Religious Leaders of Metropolitan Chicago deplore what has taken place, behavior which offends the conscience of all reasonable persons. The mutual respect which we have gained for our diverse religious and racial differences is a fundamental element of our civil society and our life together, one which extends to deep reverence and respect for those who have passed from this life.

What has happened at Burr Oak Cemetery underscores the need for sensitivity and integrity among those entrusted with the care of the dead. Why such hurt could have been inflicted on family and loved ones surpasses our understanding.

We are grateful for those who seek to bring comfort to those who have been victimized by this callous disregard for the sanctity of the final committal of those whose life on this earth has ended. We are grateful as well for those in law enforcement who are attempting to bring clarity to the confusion caused by the tragic and criminal actions at Burr Oak.

May the departed rest in peace and their survivors be restored in comfort, nurture and justice.
